National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

NL-339 (r. 88/04) c

Canada

The University of Alberta

Social/emotional characteristics of gifted/learning disabled children

by

Laurel Vespi

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Education
in Special Education

Department of Educational Psychology

Edmonton, Alberta
Spring, 1989

National Library of Canada
Canadian Theses Service
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Service des thèses canadiennes

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-52890-7

Canada

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: Laurel Vespi

TITLE OF THESIS: Social/emotional characteristics of gifted/learning disabled children.

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED: Master of education

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: Spring, 1989

Permission is hereby granted to THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

(Signed) Laurel Vespi

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

19 Ash Place
St. Albert, Alberta
T8N 3J5

DATED: April 20 1989

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Social/Emotional Characteristics of Gifted/Learning Disabled Children" submitted by Laurel Vespi in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Special Education.

C Urquhart

Supervisor

Kern Smart

Date: April 20, 1989

DEDICATION

To Frank, without whose constant love, encouragement and support this would not have been possible, and

To Emily, who allowed me to also have a parent's perspective instead of only a teacher's

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the social/emotional development of gifted/learning disabled students using a phenomenological approach. In order to understand the experiences of these children, it was felt that an experimental model would be inadequate.

Four gifted/learning disabled boys aged nine to twelve were chosen to participate in the study. A series of interviews with these students, their parents and teachers were conducted. These interviews were tape recorded and transcribed and then analyzed using a phenomenological methodology. Themes relating to each individual student's social/emotional development were extracted from the interviews. These formed the basis of a description of that student's experiences. The themes were then grouped into categories to provide an overall description of the common and unique characteristics of gifted/learning disabled children's social/emotional development. These categories were interpersonal relationships, self concept and learning characteristics.

After comparing these characteristics to those of gifted and learning disabled children, implications for parents and educators, as well as future research were discussed. In spite of some limitations with this methodology, many facets of the social/emotional development of gifted/learning disabled children were illuminated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the following people, for their contributions to this study:

...the children, parents and teachers who allowed me into their lives. Their willingness to share their experiences has provided others with a valuable insight.

...Dr. Carolyn Yewchuk for her guidance and for allowing me the opportunity to explore this fascinating topic.

...Bev Baker and Paddi McFadden because that's what friends are for.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Chapter

1. Overview....................................1

2. Literature Review...............................3

Historical Perspective..........................4

Definition of Gifted/Learning Disabled..........6

Problems in Identification......................8

Social/Emotional Characteristics of the Gifted.............................10

Social/Emotional Characteristics of the Learning Disabled...................12

Characteristics of the Gifted/Learning Disabled...................15

Rationale.......................................17

3. Methodology.....................................21

Experimental Design - Phenomenological Study...21

Statement of Presuppositions...................23

Pilot Study....................................25

Subjects.......................................26

Procedure......................................28

Analysis.......................................29

Reliability....................................32

4. Thematic Analysis..............................34

Introduction...................................34

Personal Information for "Andrew"..............35

Statement of Andrew's Experience...............45

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont'd)

Page

Chapter

Personal Information for "Adam"................47
Statement of Adam's Experience.................54
Personal Information for "Michael".............56
Statement of Michael's Experience..............63
Personal Information for "Steven"..............65
Statement of Steven's Experience...............72
General Description of Categories..............75
5. Discussion..................................86
Characteristics Similar to the Gifted..........86
Characteristics Similar to the Learning Disabled.........................87
Unique Characteristics of the Gifted/Learning Disabled...................88
Implications for Parents and Educators.........90
Limitations of the Study.......................96
Implications for Future Research...............98
Conclusions....................................99
References....................................100
Appendix A: Interview Questions...............105
Appendix B: Thematic Abstractions of Andrew's Experience...............................109
Appendix C: Thematic Abstractions of Adam's Experience...............................122

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont'd)

Page

Appendix D: Thematic Abstractions of Michael's Experience....138

Appendix E: Thematic Abstractions of Stephen's Experience....150

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

I Social/Emotional Charactristics of the Gifted..............................14

II Social/Emotional Charateristics of the Learning Disabled..................14

III Description of Emerging Themes................35

IV Distribution of Themes for Andrew.............41

V Thematic Clusters for Andrew..................43

VI Distribution of Themes for Adam...............50

VII Thematic Clusters for Adam....................52

VIII Distribution of Themes for Michael............58

IX Thematic Clusters for Michael.................61

X Distribution of Themes for Steven.............67

XI Thematic Clusters for Steven..................69

XII Distribution of Themes Within Categories (across all subjects)......................76

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

"Gifted/learning disabled" is a label which at first glance appears to be a contradiction. However, it may indeed be accurate for those children who possess tremendous intellectual potential and yet struggle with many academic tasks. Since such a discrepancy between potential ability and actual achievement may cause undue stress, this study seeks to illuminate the social/emotional development of these gifted/learning disabled children. One form of qualitative analysis, the phenomenological approach, has been chosen to achieve this end.

Chapter 2 provides an overview and historical perspective of the problem, as well as a discussion of the definition of gifted/learning disabled and the problems in identifying this population. The social/emotional characteristics of gifted and learning disabled children are reviewed prior to those of the gifted/learning disabled. Finally a rationale for this study is presented.

Phenomenological methodology is discussed in Chapter 3. This includes a statement of presuppositions by the researcher, the pilot study for this project and the specific details of the selection of subjects, procedures and the method for data analysis.

The analysis of the data is presented in Chapter 4 in both tabular and descriptive form. Background information and individual experiences are described for each subject.

Finally the common and unique characteristics among the subjects are described.

Chapter 5 summarizes the findings and relates them to the known social/emotional characteristics of both gifted and learning disabled children. Implications of these findings, the limitations of this study and directions for future research are also discussed.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Gifted/learning disabled children are a unique and unfamiliar population. It is difficult to comprehend how children with superior intellectual ability could experience tremendous academic difficulties. Of particular interest is their social/emotional development since it may have a significant impact on their learning.

"Socioemotional development means the development of emotions, the ability to get along with peers, the development of ego and superego, the ability to form attachments and affiliations with caregivers and peers, and the ability to grow and develop as a person" (Anastasiow, 1981, p.2). Cartledge & Milburn (1978) reviewed numerous studies that suggest that these types of social skills are essential to academic success. "Emotional well being and favourable attitudes and peer interactions facilitate effective academic learning" (Blanton, 1984, p.26).

However, Blanton (1984) suggests that a profile of extreme strengths and weaknesses means a student may be more inclined to have social/emotional problems. Secondary emotional problems may also develop as a result of failure and frustration. Gifted/learning disabled students may therefore be at risk for social/emotional problems.

This study is an attempt to define the experience of a gifted/learning disabled student's social/emotional growth through a phenomenological methodology. A brief literature review describes this population and outlines the social/emotional characteristics of both gifted and learning disabled students before restating the purpose of this study.

Historical Perspective

Until recently the population of students referred to as gifted/learning disabled has received little attention in theory and research. This may be explained in part by the apparent contradiction of these two terms when applied to the same person. However, this construct is not entirely new. As early as 1937, Samuel Orton explored the possibility that dyslexia could be manifested in all ranges of intelligence. Furthermore, in their book, Cradles of Eminence, Mildred and Victor Goertzel (1962) examined the lives of 400 famous men and women of the twentieth century and found that at least 60% of them demonstrated some form of learning problem.

The relative neglect of this population, in spite of indications that it existed, has been primarily due to the independent growth and development of the fields of giftedness and learning disabilities. Gifted education has historically been a response to a sociopolitical need to develop leaders. As such, only gifted students who are high achievers and capable of significant contributions have been considered as valuable assests to society. The result of this bias has been the failure to identify giftedness in persons with handicapping conditions (Whitmore, 1981).

The rise of the field of learning disabilities has been a response to the observation that some children, for no apparent reason, have difficulty learning to read and write. Special education, although intended to serve all exceptional children, has been primarily concerned with meeting the needs of physically or mentally handicapped students. Since special education has been influenced significantly by the needs of mentally retarded children, cognitive limits have been assumed for all students, even when the handicapping condition was physical (Whitmore, 1981). This assumption has tended to encourage misunderstandings about the potential abilities of some learning disabled students. Most learning disabilities programs have not considered the possibility of students who may also be gifted. These distinct origins and emphases in the gifted and learning disabilities fields have given rise to their growth as separate specializations, identified by different criteria and with services provided through different models (Yewchuk, 1985). Not only have programs historically been designed with no overlap between giftedness and learning disabilities, teacher education has also proceeded along separate lines with no encouragement to consider the possibilty that there may indeed be some intersection of these two fields.

The recent interest in children who are gifted as well as learning disabled is a result of greater interaction between specialists in both fields. Through the 1975 implementation of Public Law 94-142, the United States Education for All Children Act, gifted/learning disabled children began to be recognized. This increase in the identification of these students was a result of earlier assessment using more efficient diagnostic testing, as well as the realization that some children did not appear to fit neatly into either category of gifted or learning disabled. Whitmore (1981) indicated that as late as 1981, only three research projects to do with gifted/learning disabled students were being conducted at the University of Illinois, John Hopkins University and Texas School for the Deaf. Although discussions regarding the gifted/learning disabled have been on the increase, there appears to be no known comprehensive research effort underway in this field.

Definition of Gifted/Learning Disabled

It is only in the past few years that attempts have been made to define this population. Yewchuk (1985) provides a rationale for using this seemingly paradoxical term: gifted/learning disabled. The United States Office of

Education (USOE) definition of giftedness is widely accepted:

> Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas:
> a) general intellectual ability
> b) specific academic aptitude
> c) creative or productive thinking
> d) leadership ability
> e) visual and performing arts
> f) psychomotor ability (Yewchuk, 1985, p.123).

Therefore a child does not have to excel in all areas to be considered gifted.

The most commonly held definitions of learning disability generally include the following components:

> a) neurological dysfunction
> b) uneven growth pattern
> c) difficulty in academic and learning tasks
> d) discrepancy between potential and performance
> e) exclusion of other causes
> f) unstated assumption that the learning disabled student is of average or above average intelligence
> (Winzer, Rogow, & David, 1987, p.239).

Yewchuk (1985) states that it is conceivable then that a child with a high IQ may also be unable to achieve at school. Such a child would meet the criteria for giftedness under the USOE definition as well as the definition of learning disabled. For these children, the label of gifted/learning disabled would be appropriate.

Porter (1982) defines the gifted/learning disabled as those children who have an outstanding gift or talent and are capable of high performance but who also have a learning disorder that makes achievement difficult. The incidence of gifted/learning disabled students has been estimated to be approximately 2.3% in a study by Mauser (1980) that searched a population of learning disabled students for those who were also gifted.

Problems in Identification

The problem of identifying gifted/learning disabled students stems from a lack of knowledge regarding the existence of this population combined with an inefficient screening process. Many students are recognized as gifted/learning disabled as a result of assessment for other purposes. Within this category of gifted/learning disabled, Fox (1983) describes three subgroups. The first group includes those children who are initially referred for assessment due to learning problems and through the course of testing are discovered to have above average IQs. The second group includes those children who are referred for gifted program placements but do not meet the criteria because their achievement does not meet their potential. The third group is comprised of those children who are performing at grade level but are referred for assessment because of psychological problems and subsequently are found to have high IQs.

While these children may eventually be recognized as gifted/learning disabled, the problem of identification still exists for those students who do not come to the attention of their classroom teacher (Gunderson, Maesch, & Rees, 1987). This may be because these students are functioning at or near grade level and the teacher is unaware that this performance is far below the students' potential. The students have developed skills to compensate for their weaknesses which allow them to achieve near grade level (Weill, 1987). Also students may not be identified as gifted/learning disabled if they are currently receiving special education services for a learning disability. Since they are often not recognized as having superior ability, their program is focussed on remediating their weaknesses. Many of their strengths, which might prove to be useful in order to help compensate for their disabilities, are therefore ignored.

Gifted students who are achieving below their potential may be characterized in one of two ways. They may be underachievers or they may be learning disabled. While in practice there may be no difference between gifted/learning disabled and gifted underachievers in the sense that neither group is performing up to their potential, Gallagher (1983) differentiates between the two on a theoretical basis. He defines the gifted/learning disabled as experiencing problems stemming from some type of neurological dysfunction as opposed to the gifted underachiever whose problems result from limited opportunities, inadequate early education and/or poor motivation.

Before discussing the characteristics of the gifted/learning disabled, it is necessary to examine those known characteristics of both the gifted and the learning disabled. Once each set of characteristics has been considered separately, it will be possible to discuss those which may apply to the gifted/learning disabled.

Social/Emotional Characteristics of the Gifted

As a general rule, the social/emotional development of the gifted is viewed as very positive. This grew primarily out of the Terman studies (1925) which disputed previously held beliefs that the gifted were emotionally unstable. Terman described the gifted as having more favourable social characteristics than their peers, including less boastful exaggeration, less cheating, and greater trustworthiness. He found them to be emotionally stable, well liked and independent. Subsequent studies have confirmed Terman's findings. Davis (1985) describes the gifted as having typically high self confidence and independence as well as an internal locus of control. Such students are able to profit from their mistakes and usually see failure as resulting from a lack of effort and not ability. Consequently, gifted students often set high expectations for themselves. Renzulli and Hartman (1971) describe gifted students as having a great deal of curiosity and a keen sense of humour.

Teachers report that gifted children are above average in many desirable traits such as courtesy, cooperation, willingness to take suggestions, social adjustment, and emotional stability (Telford 1977). In many ways the gifted student appears closer to his/her mental age-mates than his/her chronological age-mates (Lehman and Erdwins 1981).

With such a postive description of social/emotional development it becomes easy to develop a stereotype of the gifted child as a "superkid". However, some gifted children also develop negative social/emotional characteristics. They often strive for perfection and become highly self-critical. They are not easily satisfied with their own speed or products. When their high goals are not met, they may become frustrated and disappointed (Renzulli and Hartman 1971). Whitmore (1988) suggests that a perceived sense of academic failure or lack of satisfaction with academic tasks may tend to encourage gifted children to withdraw or to be disruptive. These feelings, coupled with the feeling of being different, often intensify their emotional problems.

Relationships with parents may be problematic if the parents fail to recognize the child's exceptionality. As well, the parent may feel threatened by or resent the child's talents (Gold 1965). Peer problems may occur, especially in pre-adolescence or adolescence, when there is tremendous pressure to conform. Challenging the teacher, discussing intellectual questions or completing more difficult assignments may be interpreted as "showing off" (Pyryt 1979). Jacobs (1972) reports that gifted students may arouse discomfort in some teachers who have distorted stereotypes, misunderstanding or fear of these students. Inappropriate demands that are too high or too low may cause gifted students anxiety. However, in spite of these potentially negative characteristics, gifted students are viewed in general as having highly positive social/emotional development. These characteristics of the gifted which have been discussed are presented in Table I.

Social/Emotional Characteristics of the Learning Disabled

In contrast to the development of gifted children, the social/emotional development of the learning disabled is predominantly negative. Suran (1979) describes learning disabled children as suffering from "emotional overlay" which refers to "adverse emotional and behavioural problems that develop as a function of a learning disorder" (p.266). This may manifest itself in a variety of ways including anxiety, frustration, and anger towards learning. Learning disabled children are often subject to impulsivity, irritability and suggestibility (Siegel 1974). Bryan, Donahue and Pearl (1981) describe these students as suffering from low self esteem which often results in a perception of themselves as "dumb". They tend to have an external locus of control believing that they are subject to outer rather than inner forces. They are less likely to attribute success to their own abilities. Consequently, learning disabled students are often described as suffering from learned helplessness - because they expect to fail, they lose their motivation and therefore fail.

In a series of studies (1974a, 1974b, 1976, 1977, 1978) Bryan has determined that, compared to nondisabled children, learning disabled children have different interpersonal relationships with teachers and peers, have difficulty establishing friendships and eliciting positive responses from peers, are perceived as less adequate, and more often rejected by peers. Bryan also indicates that learning disabled children are less accurate in comprehending nonverbal communication. Lerner (1981) supported these findings that learning disabled children lack systematic and organized social judgement, have trouble perceiving the moods of others and have problems making friends and establishing supportive family relationships. This may also be a result of the learning disabled child's tendency towards physical or nonphysical disruption such as tripping, punching, and name-calling (Blanton, 1984). Consequently, these children are often socially withdrawn or isolated. Table II presents the social/emotional characteristics of the learning disabled.

Table I

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED
peer popularity
self confident
internal locus of control
high expectations
above average social adjustment
emotionally stable
self critical
perfectionist
pressure to conform
curious
keen sense of humour
independent

Table II

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEARNING DISABLED
rejected by peers and teachers
learned helplessness
external locus of control
low expectations
little social awareness and judgement
high anxiety
impulsive
low frustration threshold
low self esteem
disruptive
suggestible
less accurate interpreting nonverbal behaviour
poor motivation

Characteristics of the Gifted/Learning Disabled

Recent studies (Fox, Brody, & Tobin 1983; Maker 1977; Schiff, Kaufman, & Kaufman, 1981) portray gifted/learning disabled students as possessing characterisitics in common with both the gifted and learning disabled populations. As with most learning disabled students, gifted/learning disabled children encounter difficulty with tasks involving memory and perceptual abilities. However, they may also excel at tasks involving abstract thinking and problem solving as do gifted students. While these types of academic concerns have been the primary focus of research in the area of the gifted/learning disabled, a study by Schiff et. al. (1981) indicates that there may be cause for concern for the social/emotional development of this group.

Schiff et al. (1981) found that gifted/learning disabled students were more likely to be referred for psychological assessment than for skill deficiencies. These were usually self or parent referrals on the basis that the children felt unhappy and emotionally upset because they did not fit in. Janos, Fung, & Robinson (1985) reported that gifted students who described themselves as "different" showed more signs suggesting difficulties than those children who did not describe themselves as different.

Additional studies (Whitmore, 1988; Daniels, 1983; Meisgeiger, Meisgeiger, & Werblo, 1978; Maker, 1977; Feagan

& McKinney, 1981) support the idea that gifted/learning disabled children may be at risk for social/emotional problems. Gifted children who have difficulty acquiring basic skills such as reading and writing may eventually begin to believe that they have little chance for academic success and are in reality not smart. These feelings may in turn produce low motivation, helplessness and a poor academic self concept. The result of this negative attitude regarding school may be aggressive, disruptive, careless students who are frequently off-task. This inappropriate behaviour at school may actually be a result of insufficient challenge and/or frustration. Gunderson et al. (1987) suggest that this self defeating attitude contributes not only to continued academic failure but also social isolation.

In contrast, gifted/learning disabled students have also been described as creative, productive and highly motivated when completing nonacademic tasks in which they are interested (Baum, 1984; Daniels, 1983; Whitmore, 1980). It may be then, that gifted/learning disabled children possess social/emotional characteristics unique from either the gifted population or the learning disabled population.

Rationale

Previous studies with gifted/learning disabled students (Whitmore, 1981; Suter & Wolf, 1987; Wolf & Gygi, 1982) have suggested that additional research in all areas is needed. Because identification is difficult and the incidence of gifted/learning disabilities is low, little research has been reported and therefore there is a tremendous imperative for the knowledge base to increase if this population's needs are to be understood. The area of social/emotional development is particularly important since academic needs have been the primary focus of studies to date. Senf (1983) suggests that because the gifted/learning disabled population is an atypical subgroup of the learning disabled population, examination of their social and emotional functioning is absolutely required. Baum & Kirschenbaum (1984) indicate that it may be profoundly destructive for students to be labeled and treated as only learning disabled when they also possess gifted qualities. Since this study deals with the social/emotional development of children who are gifted/learning disabled, they must be the primary source of information. Only the children are able to relate what they have truly experienced. However, parents and teachers are important secondary sources of information.

In the first few years of a child's life, the family has the main influence on social/emotional development.

Upon entering school, this role is shared between the home and the school. An acknowledgement of this crucial part that parents and teachers play in a child's development resulted in the decision to include their input in this study. When considering social/emotional development, the role of the family is critical (Blanton 1984) as it may both add to or provide support for social/emotional stress. Gunderson et al. (1987) suggests that listening to and involving parents may provide a truer evaluation of a child's skills, abilities and frustrations than may be otherwise apparent. Parents are often described as knowing their children better than anyone else. They are generally very perceptive about what their children are experiencing. As well, parents have usually been a constant in their children's lives and can therefore offer information on not only present experiences, but also past experiences.

Since children spend such a large part of their time in the school setting, the role of the teacher is equally important. While helping to influence social/emotional development, teachers are also the ones who primarily see children at work on academic tasks. Their perceptions are therefore offered from a different perspective than parents, which may allow them to add important additional information.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the social/emotional development of the gifted/learning disabled. What characteristics do they exhibit? Are these characteristics similar to the gifted population, the learning disabled population or are they unique to the gifted/learning disabled group? The success and failure experiences that children have shape the way in which they view themselves, interact with others and cope with their emotions. In an achievement-oriented society, such as ours, success is of paramount importance. The effect of failure, therefore, can be extensive. The frustration, failure and rejection that the gifted/learning disabled may experience as a result of their unique profile of strengths and weaknesses is certain to increase their level of social/emotional stress. This may, in turn, impact on their overall social/emotional development.

Since it is experience which primarily dictates social/emotional development, a phenomenological approach has been chosen. The foundation of phenomenology is experience. Phenomenological researchers attempt to reach a meaningful understanding of human experience and interaction in particular situations (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). To date, the limited research in the field of the gifted/learning disabled has been from a naturalistic or experimental approach. Since there is an interaction between home and school and social/emotional development of the child, the experiential nature of this development needs to be taken into account. A phenomenological approach, incorporating the perceptions of children, parents and teachers, is therefore an appropriate method of research for this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Experimental Design - Phenomenological Study

The traditional behavioural or natural science approach to research relies on the formulation of an hypothesis which is tested in a rigourous experimental fashion. The hypothesis makes a prediction about the cause-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables. As it becomes necessary to operationalize the variables in order to determine their relationship, this type of research deals only with behaviour. Since human experience is an essential and indispensible part of human psychological phenomena, an alternative to this traditional approach to research is necessary. Valle & King (1978) propose that in order to examine human experience, the independent variable needs to be studied without the proposing and testing of a cause-effect relationship. Qualitative research therefore is interested in how people make sense out of their lives by describing rather than trying to explain. One form of this qualitative research - the phenomenological study - attempts to reveal the structure of experience through descriptive techniques. It is not concerned with explaining, predicting or controlling experiences. This method deals with "what" has happened rather than "why" it has happened.

Phenomenology "is a method which allows us to contact phenomena as we actually live them out and experience them"

(Valle & King, 1978, p.7). This psychological discipline "seeks to explicate the essence, structure or form of both human experience and human behaviour as revealed through essentially descriptive techniques" (Valle & King, 1978, p.7). This approach to research has historically been used in studies within the disciplines of anthropology and sociology.

The validity of this method may be affirmed from both a philosophical and a procedural perspective. Colaizzi (1978) maintains that, in traditional methods of research, objectivity occurs through the use of observable, measurable and duplicable definitions. This however, eliminates the study of experience. If human experience is accepted as a legitimate area of study, then objectivity must be defined in terms of being faithful to the experience as it occurred. "It is a refusal to tell the phenomenon what it is but a respectful listening to what the phenomenon speaks of itself" (Colaizzi, 1978, p.52). Procedural validation occurs by ensuring that there is nothing stated in the emerging themes which is not implied in the subjects' descriptions and that the themes account for all relevant information in the descriptions. As well, the final descriptions of the experiences are verified with the subjects to ensure that they accurately reflect their experiences.

The external validity of this type of study depends upon the researcher making a statement of his/her presuppositions about the topic in question. By prefacing the study with a description of his/her beliefs and attitudes, the researcher provides a different interviewer a context within which to interpret the same information in the same way. In addition, while results may not generalize to the population as a whole, they may provide direction for future research.

Statement of Presuppositions

For the past several years, I have taught severely learning disabled students. The discrepancies which have existed between their abilities and their achievement, as well as their wide variety of problems, have been a never ending challenge to my teaching skills. During this time I have encountered some students who seemed to be at the extremes of discrepancy between achievement and ability. These students stood out even among their learning disabled peers. However, it was not until I discovered the term "gifted/learning disabled" that I was able to begin to reconcile some of the paradoxes that existed with those students. While these gifted/learning disabled students often developed ways to cope with their learning problems, they also seemed to develop other problems as a direct result of their learning difficulties. It is for this reason that I became interested in learning more about the social/emotional development of gifted/learning disabled students.

It is my belief that the gifted/learning disabled population is largely misunderstood due to misconceptions held about both the gifted and the learning disabled, as well as the hesitation by some to acknowledge the existence of this population. The extremes of success and failure that these children experience are likely to produce significant effects on their social/emotional development. In addition, these children, because of their giftedness, are likely to be more aware of their limitations. Consequently, I believe that a unique set of characteristics will exist for them that differs from simply the intersection of those of the learning disabled and the gifted. In many respects these beliefs were validated by the results of the pilot study for this research project, which will be discussed under a separate heading.

Choosing a qualitative method of research in order to investigate these issues in itself holds a number of presuppositions. First, there must be a belief that a researcher can effectively gather data in this form. That is to say, that interviewing subjects about their feelings and experiences concerning their social and emotional development will reveal characteristics that are common among many gifted/learning disabled children. Since the subjects in this study are children who may have difficulty illuminating their experiences, I believe that the interviews of their parents and teachers will prove to be useful in helping to expand and validate themes that the children touch upon.

My background as a teacher and my involvement with these types of students may have tended to influence me to identify themes that are of an educational nature. However, having acknowledged that bias, I have attempted to be as objective as is possible in this type of research.

Pilot Study

The goal of the pilot study, conducted approximately one year prior to this research, was to investigate a qualitative method as a means of exploring the social/emotional development of gifted/learning disabled children. One such student was chosen. He was observed in his special education classroom in order to identify possible topics of discussion for the interviews. One interview was conducted with each of the student, his parents, and his teacher. These interviews were analyzed using the method which will be described later in this study. The clusters of themes which emerged were self concept, coping skills, learning style and interpersonal relationships. The pilot study was informative as it validated the use of a phenomenological methodolgy to investigate this topic while also bringing to light some of its limitations. Within this type of research, there may be a tendency on the part of the participants to "say what you want to hear". By cross-referencing the interviews of the student, parents and teacher, the instances where this has happened may be illuminated. In addition, the success of this type of study depends upon the articulateness of the participants. It therefore becomes critical that they are comfortable with both the researcher and the topic so that they may discuss their experiences with greater ease. By recognizing these limitations they can be addressed more effectively in this current study.

Subjects

Counsellors and special education teachers in a small, urban school district were asked to identify students who met the criteria for inclusion in this study. Only four such students were identified. The parents of these students were contacted by the counsellor or teacher to inquire if they wished to participate in the study. Once these parents responded favourably, they were then contacted by the researcher to discuss the study in depth and give their written consent to participate. Each student's teacher was then contacted about taking part in the study.

The criteria for inclusion in this study were based on the findings of several previous studies. Rawson (1968) observed that few children who have language disorders also have an IQ score above 135 on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test. Consequently, it is generally believed that gifted/learning disabled children will likely have depressed scores on intelligence tests. Therefore, instead of the 130 or higher cut-off score that is usually used for gifted programs, a lower cutoff score should be used for gifted/learning disabled children (Yewchuk, 1985). Studies of gifted/learning disabled children also show that the average discrepancy between Verbal and Performance Scores on the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children - Revised (WISC-R) is at least 18 points (Fox, 1983; Udall & Maker, 1983; Schiff, et al., 1981). A Verbal-Performance discrepancy of 15 points is considered to be significant at the .01 level (Weschler, 1974). Subtest scatter on the WISC-R of 7, 9, and 10 points between the highest and lowest scaled scores on the Verbal, Performance and Full Scales, respectively, is indicative of unusual scatter and is considered significant at the .15 level (Kaufman, 1976).

With these findings in mind, four subjects were chosen based on the following criteria:

a) indentification by the school system as experiencing academic difficulties and receiving assistance for these difficulties from either a resource room or special education teacher, and

b) IQ of 120 or more on one or more of the Verbal, Performance or Full Scales of the WISC-R.

Procedure

Dufrenne (1967) suggests that the spoken interview is the vehicle by which subjects come as near as possible to their lived experiences. "In effect, when I speak, I am my speaking; I become one with my words. Certainly...to speak puts me at a certain distance from that of which I speak. But between my consciousness and my speech there is no distance at all: I am in union with the language I use" (Dufrenne, 1967, p.215).

With this is mind, a single interview was conducted on an individual basis with each subject, each set of parents, and each teacher. These interviews followed a semi-structured format with a prepared guideline of questions. These questions are contained in Appendix A. Participants were encouraged, however, to speak freely and often the interview deviated from this prearranged format. Students' interviews lasted between twenty and thirty minutes. Interviews with the parents and teachers varied between thirty and sixty minutes. All student and parent interviews were conducted in their homes. Two teacher interviews took place at the school, while the other two were conducted at the researcher's home. Brief follow-up interviews were also conducted by telephone, as needed, in order to validate information previously obtained and to pursue emerging themes. The initial interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

Analysis

Upon completion of the data collection, the following procedure, based on elements from Colaizzi (1978) and Kruger (1979), was used to analyze the experiences described:

Analysis for Each Student

Reading Transcript

All of the transcripts were read to acquire a feeling for each experience described.

Selection of Statements

Significant statements or phrases that directly pertained to social/emotional development were extracted.

Paraphrase (first level abstraction)

These significant statements were then paraphrased in an attempt to state their meaning. As this is a leap from what the subject said to what they meant, Colaizzi (1978) cautions that the meanings arrived at should always be related to the original transcripts. "The researcher must go beyond what is given in the original data and at the same time stay with it. He must not formulate meanings which have no connection to the data" (Colaizzi, 1978, p.59).

Themes (second level abstraction)

Based on its meaning, each paraphrased statement was assigned a theme.

Clustering of Themes (third level abstraction)

These themes were then organized into clusters of themes. Caution again must be taken to ensure that there is nothing in the original transcript that is not accounted for by the clusters of themes as well as that the clusters of themes do not suggest anything which is not implied in the original transcript.

Synthesized Statement

A description which best depicts the subject's social/emotional development was then compiled based on the clusters of themes.

Validation of Statement

Before proceeding, the participants were contacted by telephone to discuss the contents of the synthesized statement. This was to provide the participants with the opportunity to validate that their experience has been accurately described.

Categorization Based on All Subjects

Categorization (fourth level abstraction)

Having repeated the above seven steps for each participant's transcript, the clusters of themes with similar, though not identical meanings, were then also arranged into thematic clusters which Kruger (1979) calls categories.

Generalization

An extended description of the experience of gifted/learning disabled students' social/emotional development was written based on the categories. This description includes both the common characteristics

among the subjects, as well as those
characteristics unique to one or two
subjects.

Reliability

In qualitative research reliability is the "persistence of meaning through the factual variations" (Wertz, 1986, p.200). It is not achieved by repeatedly enacting the same perspective nor by holding the context constant. Instead, by examining both the divergences and convergences in the data, the essential meaning of the experience is brought into clearer focus. Therefore, in a phenomenological methodology, "reliability cannot be separated from validity since it has no other intention than to bring what is being studied into focus in its essential meaning" (Wertz, 1986, p.200).

The essence of being reliable is to be trustworthy and dependable, thereby inspiring confidence and faith in the results obtained. The critical step in this study is at the point of assigning themes to the paraphrased significant statements. In an attempt to ensure that this was done with the highest degree of appropriateness, in any instance where, at a subsequent step, an assigned theme seemed questionable, the tape of the excerpt was replayed to verify the context within which the statement was made. In this way, the researcher checked that the original theme was indeed consistent with the meaning of the statement.

CHAPTER 4: THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the thematic analysis of the interviews with each student, his parents and teacher. For each student, the significant statements pertaining to social/emotional development were excerpted from the transcript of the interviews with the child, parents and teacher. These statements were then paraphrased in an attempt to clarify their meaning and then an appropriate theme was assigned to each statement. These first and second level abstractions of themes for each subject Andrew, Adam, Michael and Steven, are contained in Appendices B, C, D, and E, respectively. The themes are placed in order of their appearance in the transcripts, first for the child, then the parents and finally the teacher.

For clarity of discussion, all of the themes that emerged across all interviews are described in alphabetical order in Table III. As each theme emerged, it was labeled and described so that it could be used for subsequent appropriate paraphrased statements. These descriptions are presented in order to eliminate any confusion regarding each theme. The third level abstraction involved the clustering of themes into groups which have similar elements. The clusters were social skills, peer interaction, family relationships, self image, locus of control, physical or

Table III

DESCRIPTION OF EMERGING THEMES

Theme	Description
anger	feelings of anger
anxiety	feelings of nervousness
boredom	tendency to be disinterested in or unchallenged by tasks
crying	tendency to react with tears
dependence	tendency to rely on others
external locus of control for failure	degree to which failure is attributed to external causes
fear of failure	attitudes and actions motivated by a desire to avoid failure
frustration	conflict between expectations and ability
impulsivity	acting without considering all necessary information
inconsistent attention span	ability to concentrate related to requirements of a task
independence	tendency to be self-reliant
internal locus of control for failure	degree to which failure is personal responsibility
internal locus of control for success	degree to which success is within own control
lack of self confidence	lack of belief in own abilities

(Table continues)

maturity	tendency to relate to adults better than peers
negative academic self concept	negative feelings towards school and academic tasks
negative attention seeking behaviour	seeking attention through inappropriate behaviour
negative interaction with adults	negative aspects of relationships with adults
negative parental interaction	negative aspects of relationship with parents
negative peer interaction	negative aspects of relationships with peers
negative self criticism	tendency to criticize self in a non-constructive manner
negative self image	perception of self as incapable and unlovable
negative sibling interaction	negative aspects of relationships with siblings
negative teacher interaction	negative aspects of relationships with teachers
perseverance	ability to persist with difficult tasks
physical response	physical reaction to stress
planful or organized behaviour	ability to plan and organize; set goals
positive attention seeking behaviour	seeking attention through appropriate behaviour
positive non-verbal skills	ability to interpret and use non-verbal communication
positive parental interaction	positive aspects of relationship with parents
positive peer interaction	positive aspects of relationships with peers

(Table continues)

positive self criticism	ability to criticize self in a constructive manner
positive self image	perception of self as lovable and capable
positive sibling interaction	positive aspects of relationships with siblings
positive social skills	knowledge and use of socially appropriate behaviour
positive teacher interaction	positive aspects of relationships with teachers
precipitance/avoidance	tendency to avoid or complete difficult tasks hastily
reflection	tendency to think before acting
sadness	feelings of unhappiness
seeking control	desire to be in control of a situation
self awareness	ability to recognize own wants and needs
self confidence	belief in own abilities
unrealistic expectations	tendency to set unattainable goals
weak social skills	lack of knowledge or use of socially appropriate behaviour

emotional reaction to stress, academic attitudes, resourcefulness and approach to tasks. These clusters then formed the basis of the synthesized statement of experience describing each student. These descriptions dealt only with the dominant themes which were present in at least two interviews. This was done in an attempt to not overgeneralize themes for any one individual. The distribution of themes across each individual interview and the thematic clusters are each presented in tabular form for each student.

Personal Information for "Andrew"

At the time of the interviews, Andrew (a pseudonym) was 12 years, 11 months old. He is of native heritage and was adopted as an infant. He has two younger brothers, aged five and three, who are the natural children of his adoptive parents. The family situation appears to be very stable. Andrew expressed positive feelings about his family, and his mother indicated that she and his father were supportive of him and his problems. Only Andrew's mother chose to participate in the interview.

Andrew's mother described him as small in size and weight as a baby and somewhat delayed in language development. As a result, Andrew received speech-language therapy for poor articulation when he was two and one-half years old. Recent physical examinations indicate no medical concerns. He is actively involved in sports and native cultural events.

Andrew repeated grade one as he was experiencing difficulties in letter and number recognition and reversals. He also received assistance from a Reading Clinician who devised an individual reading program for him. Andrew has been in several full time special education classes for children with learning difficulties since 1984. Currently he is at a junior high school and is integrated for non-core subjects and options.

The following test results indicate that Andrew is between three and four years delayed in achievement in reading and language, while his math skills are approximately one year behind:

Metropolitan Achievement Test (March 1988)

Reading	3.3
Language	4.4
Math	5.7

It was felt by the examiner that the following WISC-R results were somewhat depressed by a weak performance in speed on visual-motor activities:

WISC-R (1988)

Information	7	Picture Completion	14
Similarities	9	Picture Arrangement	13
Arithmetic	8	Block Design	14
Vocabulary	8	Object Assembly	15
Comprehension	6	Coding	6
Digit Span	6		
Verbal Scale	85	Performance Scale	117
Full Scale	100		

Since Andrew demonstrated a 32 point discrepancy between Verbal and Performance scores which was well beyond the 18 points cited in the literature (Fox, 1983; Udall & Maker, 1983; Schiif et al., 1981), he was accepted into the study.

The excerpts taken from the interviews with Andrew, his mother and his teacher are summarized in Appendix B, along with the first and second level abstractions. Table IV displays the distribution of themes across each of the interviews. These themes were then clustered into general themes in Table V which provided the basis for the synthesized statement of Andrew's experience.

Table IV

DISTRIBUTION OF THEMES FOR ANDREW

Theme	Child	Parent	Teacher
internal locus of control for success	1	27	
* internal locus of control for failure	2		
planful or organized behaviour	3	34,40,45	
positive self criticism	4,11		84
self awareness	5,7,9,10 18,19	31	
self confidence	6	30,32,33 35	95
impulsivity	8	44	88
positive parental interaction	12,13	53,54,57	96
positive teacher interaction	14,15,16	55,56	87
positive peer interaction	17	51,59,60	98,99,101
positive self image		20,21,42 66,68	69,70,100
negative academic self concept		22,23,25	
perseverance		24,38,39 48	78,94
dependence		26,50,61	92
* fear of failure		28	

(Table continues)

Theme	Child	Parent	Teacher
external locus of control for failure		29,43	74
unrealistic expectations		36,37	79
inconsistent attention span		46,47	81,82,90
frustration		49	87,91
positive social skills		52,58	76,102,103 104
* positive sibling interaction		62	
positive non verbal skills		63,64,65	77,93,105
independence		67	72
* negative attention seeking behaviour			71,89
* positive attention seeking behaviour			73,75
* precipitance/avoidance			80,83
* negative self criticism			85,86

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

Table V

THEMATIC CLUSTERS FOR ANDREW

Cluster	Description
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	
I. Social Skills	
Themes: positive social skills positive non verbal skills	strong development of social skills and use of non-verbal communication
II. Peer Interaction	
Themes: positive peer interaction	interacts very well with peers
III. Family Relationships	
Themes: positive parental interaction * positive sibling interaction	stable, supportive relationship with family
SELF CONCEPT	
IV. Self Image	
Themes: self confidence self awareness positive self criticism positive self image * negative attention seeking behaviour * positive attention seeking behaviour * negative self criticism	general overall self image very positive - belief in own abilities - knowledge of own wants and needs

(Table continues)

V.	Locus of Control Themes: internal locus of control for success external locus of control for failure * internal locus of control for failure	believes he is responsible for his successes but tends to look for excuses for failure
VI.	Physical or Emotional Reaction to Stress Themes: frustration * fear of failure impulsivity	extremely frustrated by academic tasks, especially reading tends to act impulsively with peers when frustrated
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS		
VII.	Academic Attitudes Themes: positive teacher interaction negative academic self concept unrealistic expectations	negative feelings about school - tends to be perfectionist or set unrealistic goals - feels teacher supportive
VIII.	Resourcefulness Themes: independence dependence	tends to be independent generally but becomes dependent in academic situations
IX.	Approach to Tasks Themes: planful or organized behaviour perseverance inconsistent attention span * precipitance/avoidance	usually persists even on difficult tasks but finds it hard to concentrate on them

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

Statement of Andrew's Experience

In spite of tremendous academic difficulties, Andrew presents a relatively positive picture of social and emotional development. This likely stems from a strong self image. His involvement in native cultural events provides him with a link to his heritage as well as a way to gain recognition for his talents. His sense of who he is can be expressed in the present by traditions rooted in the past. Coupled with this are his abilities in art and sports through which Andrew has developed self confidence. This allows him to push himself in areas in which he is uncertain. He is aware of his likes and dislikes and can verbalize his needs and feelings. He acknowledges that difficult tasks make him nervous and worried. As a result of this self knowledge, it is easier for those around him to provide assistance to him. He is able to constructively criticize his performance and make plans to improve it.

Andrew is however, quite frustrated by many academic tasks. His belief in his own abilities, which he accepts as the reason for his successes, is also in part responsible for his frustration at his inability to do many school tasks. This paradox of believing he is able, yet being unable to achieve causes him to set unrealistic goals for himself and then seek excuses for his subsequent failures. His aspirations for the future are all rooted in his areas of strength which may make them attainable through the type of hard work and perseverance of which he has shown he is capable. Although his attention to a task varies greatly depending upon the degree to which he likes it or feels capable at it, he tends to persevere even on tasks he finds extremely difficult such as reading. While he may temporarily abandon an activity when he feels overwhelmed by it, he generally returns to complete it. This behaviour may be in part because he feels support from his teacher in spite of feeling negative about these types of tasks. Usually in an academic situation Andrew tends to be dependent, relying upon others for guidance and support.

Socially, Andrew is much more independent. He relates well with his peers and is able to develop and maintain a wide variety of friendships in spite of being a rather shy and quiet boy. His intuitiveness, sensitivity and ability to communicate non-verbally are all skills which enhance social relationships. Andrew acts impulsively at times with his peers by provoking them and then is surprised when they retaliate. Since this seems to be almost exclusively a school based behaviour, it may be a reflection of his frustration with academic tasks. Andrew is part of a supportive family that understands and accepts his problems. He demonstrates his feelings for his brothers in a protective manner and indicates that his parents praise and support him.

Personal Information for "Adam"

Adam (a pseudonym) was 10 years, 0 months at the time of the interviews. He is an only child. His parents indicate that they are coming to terms with Adam's academic and emotional difficulties but are feeling quite frustrated. Both Adam and his father suggest that some tension exists between them.

Adam was born by Caesarian section due to some delivery complications. He reached his developmental milestones within the average range but once he began speaking, he expanded his vocabulary very quickly. Adam has had no medical concerns, although he does have allergies. He is very interested in artistic activities and belongs to a fencing club.

Adam began experiencing social difficulties in daycare. Once in kindergarten, his mother described him as "relatively happy" but he began to feel that he did not have many of the same skills as his peers who had attended Montessori school. This was the beginning of the development of a very poor self concept. By the end of grade one, Adam was six months behind and experiencing social problems and poor work habits. Grades two and three were relatively positive experiences for Adam during which time his social problems improved. However, by grade four Adam was at least one grade level behind and beginning to experience emotional problems. These problems reached a crisis level just prior to the interviews. Adam went through a period of great depression and there was concern for his emotional stability.

Support services offered to Adam during this school year have included resource room assistance based on enrichment activities, daily individual counselling sessions and a daily "Reading Recovery" program on a one-to-one basis prior to school. Adam has also been attending a private tutoring clinic in the evenings for additional remedial assistance.

Shortly after the interviews were completed, Adam was transferred from his regular grade four classroom to a self-contained special education classroom of twelve students where he would receive intensive remedial assistance. He is integrated with his peers for non-academic subjects.

Test results indicate that Adam is currently achieving at approximately a grade three level in reading:

Canadian Test of Basic Skills (Sept. 1988)

Reading Comprehension	3.3
Vocabulary	3.2

In spite of this, his teachers feel that this is an overestimation of his achievement. They feel that he is more accurately achieving at a grade two level. Most reading and writing activities present great problems for Adam. However, he has an extensive vocabulary for his age and well developed creative thinking skills. WISC-R scores place Adam in the Superior to Very Superior range of current intellectual functioning:

WISC-R (1989)

Information	11	Picture Completion	13
Similarities	18	Picture Arrangement	15
Arithmetic	12	Block Design	14
Vocabulary	15	Object Assembly	13
Comprehension	14	Coding	13
Digit Span	6		
Verbal Scale	124	Performance Scale	126
Full Scale	128		

Subtest scatter on the Verbal Scale was 12 points.

Appendix C summarizes the excerpts from the interviews with Adam, his parents and his teacher, as well as the first and second level abstraction of themes. The distribution of these themes is displayed in Table VI. The clusters of these themes, represented in Table VII, are the basis for the statement of Adam's experience.

Table VI

DISTRIBUTION OF THEMES FOR ADAM

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
positive self image	1	27,39	
* sadness	2		
self awareness	3,13	30	
frustration	4	48,64,66	93,104
internal locus of control for failure	5,9		
boredom	6	107,108	
dependence	7	110,126	
internal locus of control for success	8	33	
negative teacher interaction	10,11,22 24	75,76,77 78	119
negative academic self concept	12,14	28,42	95
inconsistent attention span	15		113
anger	16,17,18		96,114
physical response	19	46,63	97,101
negative parental interaction	20,21	72,73	118
* positive teacher interaction	23		
negative peer interaction	25	29,41,79 80,81,82 83,90	94,103,112 120,123,124 125

(Table continues)

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
negative self image		26,34,74	92,100
* independence		31,32,53	
fear of failure		35,37,45 47,49,50 84	111
* unrealistic expectations		36,38	
maturity		40,59,70	102,115,117 122
* anxiety		43,51	
* crying		44,67,88	
precipitance/avoidance		52	106
* perseverance		54,65	
negative self critisism		55,56,57 58	109
* positive social skills		60,61	
* reflection		62	
negative attention seeking behaviour		68,69,71 89	98,99,105
seeking control		85	127,129,130
weak social skills		86,87	116,121,130
* positive non-verbal skills		91	

Note. *denotes themes found in only one interview

Table VII

THEMATIC CLUSTERS FOR ADAM[a]

Cluster	Description
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	
I. Social Skills Themes: maturity seeking control weak social skills * positive social skills * positive non-verbal skills	relates better with adults - often seeks to manipulate social situations - lacks many social skills
II. Peer Interactions Themes: negative peer interaction	has difficulty developing friendships
III. Family Relationships Themes: negative parental interaction	some conflict in relationship with parents over academic problems
SELF CONCEPT	
IV. Self Image Themes: self awareness negative self image negative self criticism negative attention seeking behaviour positive self image	aware of abilites - highly self critical - tends to seek attention in unappropriate ways

(Table continues)

V. Locus of Control Themes: internal locus of control for failure internal locus of control for success	accepts personal responsibility for success and failure - does not accept possible external causes for failure
VI. Physical or Emotional Reaction to Stress Themes: frustration anger physical response fear of failure * sadness * anxiety * crying * reflection	motivated by a tremendous fear of failure - is frustrated by academic and social situations often reacts with anger and wants to strike out physically
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS	
VII. Academic Attitudes Themes: boredom negative teacher interaction negative academic self concept * positive teacher interaction * unrealistic expectations	extreme dislike of teacher and academic tasks - often bored in school
VIII. Resourcefulness Themes: dependence * independence	tends to rely on support for school tasks
IX. Approach to Tasks Themes: inconsistent attention span precipitance/avoidance * perseverance	tries to avoid or hurry through academic tasks - has difficulty concentrating on tasks he does not enjoy

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

Statement of Adam's Experience

Adam is a child who is experiencing serious academic problems and is having an extremely difficult time coping socially and emotionally. His repeated failure experiences have resulted in a very poor self image. He is aware that he is a bright child and cannot understand why he must struggle with academic tasks. He is highly self critical to the point where he finds it difficult to even accept his successes. This lack of self esteem is also demonstrated by Adam's need to seek attention through inappropriate ways. He often tries to dominate classroom activities or acts immaturely when hurt or upset.

School and academic tasks create very negative reactions in Adam. He admits to often being bored in school and to having an extreme dislike of his teacher and the activities she gives him to do. He feels that she is generally unsupportive of his difficulties. He often feels that there is no point in pursuing tasks as he will most certainly fail. Consequently, he tries to avoid difficult tasks or hurries through them. Adam finds it hard to concentrate on such tasks although he is able to work for long periods of time on creative activities or those of which he feels capable. When Adam is successful at a task, he acknowledges that it is because he has a good attitude towards it or enjoys it. He also assumes responsibility for unsuccessful tasks, indicating that failure is again a result of his attitude. He does not admit that the task characteristics may indeed be the reason for his failure. Adam tends to be very dependent in academic situations, often seeking assistance even when it is not required.

This stress of knowing that he has a great deal of ability and yet is unable to achieve has made Adam feel very frustrated with any type of school related activity. The mounting frustration and repeated failure experiences have combined to produce a tremendous fear of failure in Adam. He is often motivated in attitude and actions to simply avoid possible failure. When he is frustrated, he tends to become angry and wants to react physically, although he seems to be able to keep his anger somewhat under control.

Social situations tend to increase Adam's frustration and fear of failure. He has difficulty making friends and lacks many of the necessary social skills. Other children often do not understand him as he functions, in some respects, far above their level. He relates much better with adults and tends to seek out their company and approval. Another reflection of his poor self image is his tendancy to try to control social situations and manipulate those around him.

Adam seems to have a supportive relationship with his mother who works closely with him developing some of his weaker skills. He indicates that he believes his parents are sometimes frustrated by his learning problems. They also suggest that they are still coming to terms with Adam's difficulties. There is some tension between Adam and his father, as Adam often feels that his father is overly critical. This relationship, however, seems to be improving.

Personal Information for "Michael"

Michael (a pseudonym) was 10 years, 7 months at the time of the interviews. He is an only child, born to parents who are middle-aged. His mother is legally blind as a result of a rare, hereditary retinal disorder. Michael is part of a stable, extended family that includes his grandmother. His parents expressed support of him and his learning problems but also indicated that they feel frustrated and somewhat guilty.

Michael was born by Caesarian section due to maternal age (39 years) with no postnatal complications. He met all of his developmental milestones early, walking at nine months without crawling. He has had no medical concerns and was described by his parents as a "normal child" who is somewhat "excitable but controllable".

Michael began school in a grade one French Immersion program and then repeated grade one in a regular English class. He began attending a resource room for several periods in grade two for extra help with Language Arts. Michael especially has difficulty with written work due to poor visual spatial skills. He is currently in his second year in a self-contained special education classroom for children with learning difficulties. He is integrated into a regular classroom for non-academic subjects.

Reading and language tests indicate that Michael is approximately two years behind. Math is an area of relative strength for Michael who achieves at grade level:

Metropolitan Achievement Test (March 1988)

Reading	2.3
Language	2.7
Math	4.7

His WISC-R results are as follows:

WISC-R (1985)	Verbal Scale	124
	Performance Scale	105
	Full Scale	110

Subtest information was not available.

The excerpts from the interviews with Michael, his parents and teacher and the first and second level abstractions are summarized in Appendix D. Table VIII presents the distribution of themes across all three interviews. These themes are clustered into general themes in Table IX, which is followed by a statement of Michael's experience.

Table VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF THEMES FOR MICHAEL

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
positive self image	1,2	37,39	
* self awareness	3,9,35, 36		
* negative academic self-concept	4,5,32		
positive teacher interaction	6,30,31, 34	65,66	101,102
internal locus of control for success	7	45	83
internal locus of control for failure	8		84,92
* planful or organized behavior	10,13		
self-confidence	11,12,19	38,47	
unrealistic expectations	14,15	48	87
* perseverance	16		
negative self criticism	17,20		80,93
impulsivity	21,22	56,57	
inconsistent attention span	23,24	59,60	94,96
anger	25	41,62	

(Table continues)

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
physical response	26	63	91
precipitance/avoidance	27	49,55,74	86
positive non-verbal skills	28	75	106,107,108
* negative interaction with adults	29		
sadness	33		110
frustration		40	79
fear of failure		42,50,54	81,89
positive social skills		43,52,68 73	77
dependence		44	95,105
* external locus of control for failure		46	
weak social skills		51	97
* negative attention seeking behavior		53	
independence/		58,72	82
* boredom		61	
* positive parental interaction		64	
* positive peer interaction		67,69	

(Table continues)

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
negative peer interaction		70,71	98,103,104
negative self image		76	78,99
maturity			85,100,109
* lack of self-confidence			88

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

TABLE IX

THEMATIC CLUSTERS FOR MICHAEL

Cluster	Description
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	
I. Social Skills Themes: maturity positive social skills positive non-verbal skills weak social skillsl skills * negative interaction with adults	relates well with adults - able to communicate non-verbally - tends to be shy
II. Peer Interactions Themes: negative peer interactions * positive peer interactions	has difficulty developing and maintaining peer relationships
III. Family Relationship * positive parental interaction	no strong themes
SELF CONCEPT	
IV. Self Image Themes: negative self image positive self image self-confidence negative self criticism * self awareness * negative attention seeking behaviour * lack of self control	critical of inability to do tasks - believes in own abilities
V. Locus of Control Themes: internal locus of control for failure internal locus of control for success * external locus of control for failure	believes success is result of own effort but seeks excuses for failure
VI. Physical or Emotional	

(Table continues)

Reaction to Stress	
Themes: frustration anger physical response sadness anxiety fear of failure impulsivity	feels frustrated, angry, anxious - is afraid to try things as he might fail - often wants to strike out physically - tends to be somewhat impulsive
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS	
VII. Academic Attitudes	
Themes: boredom unrealistic expectations positive teacher interaction * negative academic self concept	tends to be bored with school tasks - expects to achieve at any undertaking - gets along well with teacher
VIII. Resourcefulness	
Themes: dependence independence	independent except at academic tasks
IX. Approach to Tasks	
Themes: inconsistent attention span precipitance/avoidance * planful or organized behaviour * perseverance	has difficulty staying with academic tasks - tends to avoid or hurry through them

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

Statement of Michael's Experience

Michael presents himself as a relatively happy child but in reality he seems to be struggling with many negative feelings and unproductive work habits. He does not have a strong self image. He tends to be overly critical about his inability to do academic tasks in spite of acknowledging that there are also many things which he does do well. He has an excellent sense of humour and has very good oral skills. In addition, he is artistic and enjoys doing creative activities.

Michael reacts to the stress of his learning problems with a variety of negative feelings. He admits that he is generally frustrated, unable to understand why he cannot achieve at school. This is combined with feelings of sadness and anxiety. His academic history has led him to be afraid of failure. This has resulted in an approach to school tasks which will enable him to avoid the possibility of failure. Michael tends to become angry and acknowledges that he often wants to strike out physically when he is frustrated.

Michael expects that he should be able to do not only academic tasks, but anything that he attempts to do. Consequently, he sets unrealistic goals that often lead to failure. As a result, Michael tends to approach tasks with the attitude that he must hurry and finish them or avoid them entirely. When he does achieve success, he naturally attributes it to his own abilities, hard work and attitude. However, when he is not successful, he is quick to seek excuses for why he has failed. Michael's attention span for activities varies greatly. He has difficulty staying with a task he finds challenging, and also indicates that he easily becomes bored with many school tasks. In spite of this generally negative attitude towards school, he does not overtly admit to disliking academic tasks. He also finds his teacher very supportive and enjoys being with her. With the exception of academic tasks, Michael tends to be resourceful and independent. However, at school he generally needs to be coached when doing assignments.

In social situations, Michael tends to relate better with adults than his peers. This may reflect his status as an only child who is surrounded often by adults. He is able to communicate non-verbally and is aware of and accepts many conventions of social behaviour. Michael is well behaved and easy-going. However, Michael has difficulty interacting with his peers. At times he tends to be shy or act impulsively. In spite of the observations of those around him, he does not seem to acknowledge that he has a lack of constant and well developed friendships. Family relationships did not emerge as a strong theme.

Personal Information for "Steven"

Steven (a pseudonym) was nine years, eight months when the interviews were conducted. He is the middle child, having eleven and seven year old brothers. Steven appears to come from a very stable and supportive family situation. His parents indicated great interest and concern for helping Steven to achieve his potential.

There were no prenatal or postnatal concerns regarding Steven's birth. He reached most of his developmental milestones within the average range but was slow to develop speech. He has had no medical problems with the exception of recurring ear infections when he was two years old and his current allergies. He enjoys artistic activities but does not actively participate in sports.

Although he demonstrated interest in books in both nursery school and kindergarten, Steven has consistently had difficulties with reading and spelling. He began to encounter problems with phonics in grade one. It was also noted in grade two that he made an effort to avoid completing tasks. He began receiving resource room help in grade three which has continued to the present. Currently in grade four, Steven also has the assistance of a private tutor twice a week.

Recent test results indicate that Steven is approximately two years behind in reading and language:

Canadian Achievement Test (Sept. 1988)

Reading	2.8
Language	2.9
Vocabulary	4.0
Math	3.7

He has weak visual perceptual skills and tends to reverse letters in both reading and spelling. In math, Steven performs at grade level. WISC-R results indicate strong verbal reasoning skills:

WISC-R (1987)

Information	13	Picture Completion	11
Similarities	13	Picture Arrangement	11
Arithmetic	14	Block Design	11
Vocabulary	15	Object Assembly	13
Comprehension	16		
Digit Span	8		
Verbal Scale	125	Performance Scale	111
Full Scale	121		

Excerpts from the interviews with Steven, his parents and his teacher are summarized in Appendix E, as well as the first and second level abstractions of themes. The distribution of themes across the three interviews is represented in Table X. The themes were then clustered and presented in Table XI which forms the basis for the description of Steven's experience.

Table X

DISTRIBUTION OF THEMES FOR STEVEN

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
positive self image	1,16,18 22	25,26,27 28,29,37 44,49,63 64	85,86,100
* self awareness	2,5,11		
* perseverance	3		
independence	4	34,35,79	
planful or organized behaviour	6,7	45	93
unrealistic expectations	8	42,46,47	94
boredom	9	50,55	96
* negative self criticism	10		
negative academic self concept	12,23	30,51,52 62,72	
physical response	13	89	
* weak social skills	14		
negative parental interaction	15	69,70,71	111,112
positive teacher interaction	17	74,75	105
positive peer interaction	19,21,24	77	
positive social skills	20	76,80	103

(Table continues)

Theme	Child	Parents	Teacher
fear of failure		31,41,43 48	90
* negative self image		32	
lack of self confidence		33	95,99,109
self confidence		36	91
* internal locus of control for success		38,39	
internal locus of control for failure		40	92
inconsistent attention span		54,60,61	97,102
frustration		54	88
precipitance/avoidance		56,57,73	98
* reflection		58	
impulsivity		59	101
dependence		65	108
negative peer interaction		66,78	106,107
* maturity		67	
positive parental interaction		68	104
positive non verbal skills		81,82,83	110
* negative sibling interaction		84	

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

Table XI

THEMATIC CLUSTERS FOR STEVEN

Cluster	Description
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	
I. Social Skills Themes: positive social skills positive non-verbal skills * weak social skillsl skills * maturity	acts as role model for appropriate social behaviour - interprets non-verbal communication
II. Peer Interactions Themes: negative peer interactions positive peer interactions	improving peer interactions - is beginning to develop more friends - tends to move from friend to friend
III. Family Relationships Themes: negative parental interactions positive parental interactions * negative sibling interactions	supportive family - some tension from parental expectations
SELF CONCEPT	
IV. Self Image Themes: positive self image self confidence lack of self confidence * self awareness * negative self criticism * negative self image	believes in own ability but lacks confidence in competition and some social situations

(Table continues)

V. Locus of Control Themes: internal locus of control for failure * internal locus of control for success	believes his ability accounts for his success - believes he is also responsible for failure
VI. Physical or Emotional Reaction to Stress Themes: frustration fear of failure physical response impulsivity * reflection	frustrated by academic tasks - tends to become physically tense motivated by avoidance of failure situations
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS	
VII. Academic Attitudes Themes: boredom unrealistic expectations positive teacher interaction negative academic self concept	tends to be bored with school - sets unrealistic goals - enjoys teachers company
VIII. Resourcefulness Themes: dependence independence	generally dependent in daily living skills and tasks of which he's capable - relies on others when challenged

(Table continues)

IX. Approach to Tasks Themes: inconsistent attention span precipitance/avoidance planful or organized behaviour * precipitance	attention to task depends on specific task - tries to hurry through or avoid difficult tasks - sets goals for future

Note. * denotes themes found in only one interview

Statement of Steven's Experience

Steven's social and emotional development seems to be quite positive. He and those involved with him indicate that he has been improving in all areas. Steven is aware of his strengths and weaknesses and believes that he will be able to achieve because of his inner abilities. However, this self confidence is not reflected as strongly in competitive or social situations. Steven sees himself as an unique individual with the ability to make unique contributions.

While Steven indicates that he likes his teacher very much, he also admits to often being bored at school. This occurs usually with activities that are hard or repetitive. This combined with his difficulties in reading and written work has produced negative feelings towards school tasks. Steven believes the reason for his successes is his ability to do things. He also feels that he is primarily responsible for his failures which he believes are usually the result of not understanding a task that he should have. He does not blame the difficulty of the task for his failure. Because he feels that he can achieve, he often sets unrealistic goals for himself. He believes that assignments must always be correct or else he has failed. These perceived and actual failures have tended to make him rush through or avoid those academic tasks he finds difficult. At times though, he will not put forth his best effort even in areas such as art where he is successful. His teacher indicates that in these instances, he expects far too little of himself. His ability to concentrate and attend to a task depends very much on whether or not he wants to do it. Steven has definite aspirations for the future. His parents and teacher project that he will likely find a way to achieve these goals.

The particular situation dictates whether Steven will be dependent or independent. On school tasks of which he feels capable, he prefers to work alone, without distractions. However, if it is an assignment on which he is having difficulty, he tends to give up without constant support. In daily living skills he functions quite independently but often assumes a follower role with peers.

Steven indicates that he feels frustrated by some academic tasks. This frustration is usually manifested by a physical tension visible in his face and body. Steven has developed a fear of failure that he demonstrates in part by wanting to know what his parents' and teacher's reactions will be if he fails at a particular task and in a tendency to want to avoid some activities.

Steven possesses some very positive social skills. He generally acts in a very socially appropriate manner and is able to interpret non-verbal communication. In this way, Steven often acts as a role model for his peers. These skills, combined with recent academic successes, have given

Steven the confidence to develop new friendships. His teacher indicates that there has been a marked improvement in Steven's interpersonal relationships this year, although he still has difficulty maintaining friendships. He tends to rotate through a variety of friends rather than concentrating on a few close ones. Steven states that he has a plan for making new friends by meeting them through existing friends. Occasionally Steven tends to act impulsively but his parents suggest that this occurs in situations in which Steven feels very comfortable and therefore tends to not think about his actions as much. This too seems to be improving.

In general, Steven's family situation is very supportive. There is an acceptance of his problems although his parents indicate that they may at times place greater expectations on him than are necessary.

General Description of Categories

Clusters of themes which emerged for each subject were grouped according to common elements. This fourth level abstraction of themes is represented in Table XII. Three broad categories of themes emerged: interpersonal relationships, self concept and learning characteristics. The description of these categories contains the common characteristics shared by three or four subjects. This criterion was decided upon at the discretion of the researcher in an attempt to avoid overgeneralizing less dominant themes. Those characteristics which apply to only one or two individuals are also included under a separate heading. Since these are the characteristics which make the subjects individuals, they are also important to note. Given a different group of subjects, some of these traits might also have emerged as common characteristics.

Interpersonal Relationships

Common Characteristics

This category is comprised of the clusters social skills, peer interactions and family relationships. An interesting paradox exists within this category. With the exception of Adam, the other children, at times, all demonstrate positive social skills. They know what is socially appropriate behaviour and tend to act in ways that adults describe as role models for their peers. They are not thought of as behaviour problems, but rather as

Table XII

DISTRIBUTION OF THEMES WITHIN CATEGORIES
(ACROSS ALL SUBJECTS)

Themes	Andrew	Adam	Michael	Steven
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS				
I. Social Skills				
positive social skills	x	x	x	
positive non verbal skills	x	x	x	x
weak social skills		x	x	x
maturity		x	x	x
* seeking control		x		
* negative interaction with adults			x	
II. Peer Interactions				
positive peer interaction	x		x	x
negative peer interaction		x	x	x
III. Family Relationships				
positive parental interaction	x		x	x
* positive sibling interaction	x			x
* negative parental interaction		x		x
SELF CONCEPT				
IV. Self Image				
self confidence	x		x	x
self awareness	x	x	x	x
* positive self criticism	x			
positive self image	x	x	x	x
negative self image		x	x	x
negative self criticism	x	x	x	x
negative attention seeking behaviour	x	x	x	
* lack of self confidence			x	x
* positive attention seeking behaviour	x			

(Table continues)

Themes	Andrew	Adam	Michael	Stephen
V. Locus of Control				
internal locus of control for failure	x	x	x	x
internal locus of control for success	x	x	x	x
* external locus of control for failure	x		x	
VI. Physical or Emotional Reaction to Stress				
frustration	x	x	x	x
* anger		x	x	
physical response		x	x	x
fear of failure	x	x	x	x
* sadness		x	x	
* anxiety		x	x	
* crying		x		
impulsivity	x		x	x
* reflection		x		x
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS				
VII. Academic Attitudes				
positive teacher interaction	x	x	x	x
negative academic self concept	x	x	x	x
unrealistic expectations	x	x	x	x
boredom		x	x	x
* negative teacher interaction		x		
VIII. Resourcefulness				
dependence	x	x	x	x
independence	x	x	x	x
IX. Approach to Tasks				
planful or organized behaviour	x		x	x
perseverance	x	x	x	x
inconsistent attention span	x	x	x	x
precipitance/avoidance	x	x	x	x

Note. * denotes themes present for less than three subjects easy-going, pleasant and co-operative children. Non-verbal skills are also an area of strength. These three children are sensitive to the situational mood and are aware of the feelings of others around them. They interpret facial expressions, gestures and body language with relative ease, as well as being able to communicate themselves in this way.

It is surprising then that these children experience some difficulty interacting in a positive way with their peers. Only Andrew does not seem to have great difficulty establishing friendships and maintaining those friendships for any length of time. Generally, they seem to have the knowledge of how to make and keep friends, but are unable to put this knowledge to use. Their social skills with respect to peers are often weak. This difficulty with peer relationships may stem in part from a tendency to act impulsively with peers when under stress. In addition, they may be hesitant in establishing relationships for fear of rejection because of the stigma of their learning problems. As a result, all of the children expressed frustration stemming from a lack of satisfaction with their peer relationships in spite of having many of the skills necessary for positive interactions.

Three of the children appear to relate better to adults than their peers. This may be in part because they tend to have well developed verbal skills and are able to understand more mature conversations than their peers. As well, since two boys are only children, they may be more accustomed to adult company.

Supportive family relationships were identified by three of the children. Although all of the parents expressed some stress in coming to terms with their child's problems, they also indicated a willingness to learn to accept these difficulties. The parents appear to be in varying stages of acceptance, largely due to the length of time that they have been actively dealing with their child's problems. It may be that the level of support and understanding that families are able to offer has a direct impact on the children's ability to cope with their own stress.

Individual Characteristics

Some characteristics within this category were unique to one or two individuals. Adam and Steven, while acting impulsively at times, also appear to be capable of being reflective. This trait seems to be increasing for them as they are more often stopping and thinking about the consequences of their actions.

Michael, although getting along well with adults, indicated that they still represent an authority figure to him. As such, he sees adults as those people who discipline you. This was not expressed by any of the other boys.

Both Andrew and Steven expressed positive feelings about their siblings. As only children, the other two boys have obviously not had the opportunity to have this experience.

While expressing positive feelings about their parents, Adam and Steven also indicated an awareness of their parents' frustration with respect to their learning problems. They feel that this creates a certain tension which is exacerbated by expectations that are sometimes unrealistic.

Self Concept

Common Characteristics

This category reflects general feelings of self esteem and is comprised of the clusters Self Image, Locus of Control and Physical or Emotional Reaction to Stress. Remarkably, in spite of such tremendous learning difficulties, these students expressed generally positive feelings of self image and self confidence. These feelings were validated by their parents and teachers. They acknowledged that they are bright children who have many abilities. Activities of which they are capable or at which they excel, they are eager to talk about. All four children have well developed creative abilities in which they take pleasure. In addition, they all have relative strengths in mathematical skills and are able to achieve at least at grade level. This belief in their own abilities and perception of themselves as capable has produced feelings of self confidence. All of the children expressed an awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, needs and wants. It is only when they are mired down in the frustration of reading or writing tasks that their self doubts surface. Three children expressed aspirations for the future, having already chosen fields in which they are likely to achieve success because they will draw on their areas of strength.

This belief in their own abilities has produced an internal locus of control for success for three of the children. They feel that their success is a direct result of their abilities, hard work and appropriate attitude. However, because they tend to view themselves as capable, all of the children see themselves as the reason for failure. This internal locus of control for failure does not take into account that the task charactertistics or demands may in reality be the reason for a lack of success. Consequently, when they are unable to achieve, they tend to take it personally and become even more frustrated.

Frustration is an emotion that is consistent across all four children. Believing that you are a capable person and being constantly reminded that you are bright makes dealing with underachievement difficult. This frustration is manifested in how these children approach academic tasks, as well as in a tendency to respond physically to stress. This reaction may sometimes be a desire to strike out in anger in order to vent some of their frustration. However, none of the children apparently act on these feelings. This, on one hand, demonstrates an incredible amount of self control but at the same time, indicates that there are many unresolved feelings that need to be addressed. At other times this frustration results in a visible tension in the face or body, or in negative attention seeking behaviour. At times these children may act impulsively, primarily with their peers, which may be a result of their built up frustration. All of the children tend to be critical of themselves which may reflect a frustration with what they feel is an unacceptable performance.

The fear of failure is a strong theme which runs across three children. Many times it is the primary motivating force behind their attitude and effort towards school tasks. It is easy to understand why children who believe strongly in their own abilities, who repeatedly fail at tasks, begin to avoid those tasks. Each failure is another chink in their self perception and they become motivated to protect its self destruction.

Individual Characteristics

Andrew possesses additional characteristics from the other children which may be reflective of his strong self concept. Generally he is able to criticize his performance in a constructive manner and then use that information to improve subsequent performances. Andrew also tends to seek attention in appropriate ways by looking to his teacher for approval when he has been successful.

Although they are generally internally motivated, at times both Andrew and Michael seek external excuses for failure. This occurs when it is least appropriate, that is, when their failure has been a result of their own behaviour.

Michael and Steven tend to react to stress by beginning to doubt their own abilities. This causes them to believe, at times, that they are only capable of certain tasks and to avoid competitive situations.

As well as the negative emotions shared with the other boys, Adam and Michael have additional negative feelings. Both experience feelings of anger, sadness and anxiety as a result of their academic problems. This creates the extra stress of having to cope with unproductive and sometimes overwhelming feelings. Adam also tends to resort to tears when he is particularly frustrated.

Learning Characteristics

Common Characteristics

Fear of failure is also manifested in many of the themes included in this category. It encompasses how the children approach academic tasks and their attitudes towards them. This category is comprised of the clusters Academic Attitudes, Resourcefulness and Approach to Tasks. Remarkably, in spite of generally negative attitudes towards school and negative approaches to academic tasks, three of the children express extremely positive feelings about their teachers. These teachers are described as very supportive and caring individuals who attempt to provide fun and interesting activities to do. However, in contrast the children also describe themselves as often being bored at school because of the repetitive nature of tasks or disinterest in assignments that are too difficult.

One consequence of a strong belief in their abilities is the tendancy of these children to have unrealistic expectations about their achievement. They truly believe when they set out to complete a task, or learn a new skill, that they will be able to do it with relative ease. Their parents and teachers indicate that the children are genuinely surprised that they are unable to do some of the things they try. Having these high expectations, combined with learning difficulties, creates an atmosphere in which their fear of failure can flourish. As a result, three of the children tend to either avoid any academic task at which they anticipate failure or to rush through it to complete it as quickly as possible. Completing a task becomes far more important than the quality or accuracy of the work. It is also very hard for any of these children to attend to any difficult academic tasks. Their attention span is quite limited when their focus is on being finished quickly. Conversely, if they are involved in an activity they enjoy or which calls upon their talents, such as art, they are able to concentrate for extended periods of time. Not attending to a task appears to be a coping mechanism for dealing with the anticipated frustration of tackling a difficult task. However, with encouragement and support, all of the children are able to persevere even on difficult tasks.

While all of the children tend to be quite dependent when it comes to academic tasks, they are relatively independent in daily living type activities. Constant support and encouragement is needed if these children are to be able to complete challenging academic assignments. This too is likely rooted in a fear of a failure and a desire to avoid potentially unsuccessful situations unless someone is there for guidance. However, three of the children are quite resourceful and are able to take care of themselves and seek their own solutions to their problems.

Individual Characteristics

Only Adam expressed very negative feelings towards his teachers. He feels they are largely unsupportive of and knowledgeable about his problems. These feelings certainly must increase his stress with regards to academic tasks.

In general, these children seem to possess many positive social and emotional characteristics. Their main area of need is in dealing with those academic tasks that they find difficult. It is in this area that they tend to develop negative attitudes and work habits which may ultimately begin to affect the more positive aspects of their development.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

In the previous chapter, the themes which emerged in the interviews were clustered into categories. These categories were interpersonal relationships, self concept and learning characteristics. The descriptions of these categories were based on both the common characteristics shared by the subjects, as well as those characteristics which were unique to one or two individuals.

Chapter two presented the dominant characteristics of both the gifted and the learning disabled. The experiences of the children in this study demonstrate that the social/emotional characteristics of neither the gifted nor the learning disabled clearly describe them. They do not fit neatly into either category. It would seem that in general the gifted/learning disabled resemble the learning disabled with respect to negative academic characteristics, yet resemble the gifted in terms of some positive emotional characteristics. In addition, they also exhibit some characteristics which are different from either the gifted or the learning disabled.

Characteristics Similar to the Gifted

The children in this study had many of the same characteristics as those reported for gifted students by Davis & Rimm (1985). Like gifted students, these children are primarily internally motivated. They believe that their successes and failures are under their own control. This tends to result from a belief in their own abilities and feelings that they will be able to achieve. However, this self confidence also tends to create high expectations which are not always realistic.

These children also share the trait of independence with gifted children, although this is generally in non-academic situations. The ability to accurately interpret and communicate with non-verbal communication is another characteristic gifted and gifted/learning disabled children have in common.

Characteristics Similar to the Learning Disabled

As would be expected, the children in this study have many of the same negative academic characteristics as learning disabled children. They have a great deal of frustration and anxiety about academic tasks and their discrepancy between their performance and potential ability. These negative feelings result in unproductive approaches to tasks. They often hurry through or avoid tasks and tend to have difficulty concentrating on activities. Therefore, these children appear to suffer from the same "emotional overlay" that Suran (1979) reported learning disabled children experience.

While they do not have extremely successful relationships with peers, gifted/learning disabled children cannot truly be described as being rejected by peers and teachers in the same way learning disabled children usually are. Nor do they appear to have progressed to the state of learned helplessness. While learning disabled children often believe that they cannot achieve and therefore feel helpless, gifted/learning disabled children seem to have managed to maintain, for the most part, the belief that they can achieve.

Unique Characteristics of the Gifted/Learning Disabled

Some of the common characteristics which formed part of the description of these gifted/learning disabled students are different from both the characteristics of the gifted and the learning disabled. The powerful fear of failure that these children experience did not seem to be present in the literature for either the gifted or the learning disabled. It might be assumed that the learning disabled would also have a fear of failure as a result of their negative academic experiences. One possible reason that it might exist for these gifted/learning disabled students, is that they tend to believe in their abilities and expect achievement. When they are unsuccessful, the conflict between their expectations and their achievement may heighten their fear of failure.

Inconsistent social skills were also a unique characteristic. While the children tended to have many positive social skills, they often did not make use of them. This is a different problem from children who do not have the necessary skills. Unsatisfactory peer relationships may be the result of the inconsistent use of these social skills.

A self image which tends to fluctuate was the third unique characteristic. Although generally positive, these children's self images are beginning to become tarnished by the continual conflict between their expectations and their achievement. Repeated failure experiences may serve to undermine their postive self image. It then becomes increasingly more difficult to disregard what they perceive as the evidence that they are not capable. Without support, it may be that the gifted/learning disabled will eventually develop more negative characteristics such as learned helplessness.

If this is indeed representative of the shared experience of the gifted/learning disabled child, then four areas must be addressed with respect to their social/emotional needs. These are accurate identification of these students, appropriate programming, parent education and increased public awareness.

Implications for Parents and Educators

Identification

Since gifted/learning disabled students may be at risk for some social/emotional problems, effective identification is critical. If their needs are to be met, there must first be an accurate and efficient method by which to identify them. There are no simple answers to this problem. Comprehensive assessment procedures may be too costly for school districts. What becomes fundamental then is a clear understanding of the characteristics of these children as the foundation of whatever identification model is designed. Relying strictly on a method that is based solely on achievement and ability test scores may result in a failure to identify a large number of students. Weill (1987) suggests that identification requires "careful detective work" since the gifted/learning disabled may be found not only in special education programs but also in regular classrooms. It may not be suspected that children who are achieving at or even above grade level may still be performing far below their potential level of achievement.

Another central issue in identification is dealing with the stereotypical expectations of teachers. How teachers perceive the children in their classrooms affects the type of recommendations they may or may not make. Those children who appear to be coping in a regular classroom may be ignored if their teacher does not acknowledge that gifted children can also experience learning problems. The talents of children who have severe reading problems and who are therefore in special education classes may also be ignored. In a study designed to examine the influence that the labels "physically handicapped" and "learning disabled" had on the recommendations made for gifted children, Minner, Prater, Bloodworth & Walker (1987) found that teachers may be discriminating against these children. Stereotypical beliefs about the characteristics of learning disabled children tended to prevent the gifted/learning disabled from participating in gifted programming.

Recognition of the social/emotional characteristics of the gifted/learning disabled may serve as a useful indicator of children who could then be more intensively assessed. Children who seem to be quite frustrated or who approach academic tasks as described in this study, may be those children who are achieving far below their potential. Relying on these types of observations as indicators, assuming they are based on a sound knowledge and awareness of the characteristics, may help to avoid the trap of depending on an identification model that is so rigid it fails to identify many students. Hoffman (1979) maintains that flexibility is therefore a key component in the search for gifted/learning disabled students.

Programming

Whitmore (1981) suggests that gifted/learning disabled students have tended to succeed in spite of school and not as a result of good programming. It is beyond the scope of this study to address the educational needs and programming of these children. However, their social/emotional needs should also be factored into whatever educational program is implemented. The impact of the school can be far reaching on social/emotional development. Schools deal with a great number of students who spend a tremendous number of hours in the classroom over the course of their school career (Busch-Rossnagel & Vance 1982). This provides an excellent opportunity to foster personal growth and coping skills. Programs must be designed that explain the students' disability, encourage them to be successful and yet teach them to set realistic goals and accept their limitations. This would require not only the teaching of specific coping strategies but also a counselling component that would help them to deal with their emotions. Teachers of such a program would likely need special training.

Fostering competency in social relationships and enhancing peer acceptance would be important goals in any program for gifted/learning disabled students. Teachers have a large impact on social interactions (Rist 1970). By structuring the learning environment to increase positive interactions, teachers would allow these students the opportunity to put to use many of the strong social skills they already possess. Gifted/learning disabled students could then be allowed to develop and maintain the postive relationships with their peers they so desire.

Renzulli (1977) indicates that task commitment is far more important than extremely high intelligence. Repeated failures and lack of motivation may have tended to cause gifted/learning disabled children to have difficulty maintaining their commitment to tasks. They usually avoid difficult tasks or hurry through them. Learning a set of coping skills may help to alleviate this problem. Stress inoculation, advocated by Meichenbaum (1975) and Novaco (1978), is one such coping skills approach. The learning environment is structured so that stressors are not allowed to overwhelm the students. In addition, students are taught a variety of cognitive and behavioural coping skills with which to respond to particularly stressful experiences. In this way, students are "inoculated" against large quantities of stress.

By designing programming that treats the whole child, not simply educational needs, gifted/learning disabled children are placed at less risk for the crippling effects of negative attitudes and emotions, thereby enabling them to develop self-understanding, self-acceptance and effective coping strategies.

Parent Education

Parenting and the home environment have been critical factors in the development of society's greatest achievers (Bricklin 1983). In a study of one hundred internationally acclaimed musicians, mathematicians and athletes, the University of Chicago Development of Talent Project (1982) found that responsive parents and home atmosphere were key factors in producing these exceptional achievers.

The importance of parents to a child's progress and the ultimate realization of the child's potential can not be overlooked. All parents expressed some difficulty coping with the variety of emotions they felt regarding their child's academic problems. An intervention model for parents could allow them the opportunity to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to the issues involved in their child's disability. For example, information could be shared by school personnel with respect to normal developmental patterns, the nature of their child's problem, dealing with their own emotions of anger, hurt and fear, as well as coping with their child's feelings. A strong counselling component could complement this educational component. The importance of this intervention would need to be demonstrated by actively involving teachers in a collaborative role with parents. In this sense, the intervention model would not be an ancillary service, but rather a primary component of the child's program.

Increasing Public Awareness

Whitmore (1988) states that a child is less at risk when a culture accepts and reinforces individuality. Since the gifted/learning disabled are a relatively new phenomenon in terms of popular knowledge, it is important that awareness of their characteristics and needs increases. Universities must accept a strong role in this task, particularly with respect to teacher training. In addition to learning what educational needs gifted/learning disabled students have, teachers must also be made aware of social/emotional needs of these students. Adequate knowledge of normal developmental stages will help teachers to identify students who may have problems. Increased knowledge will also help to eliminate some of the stereotypical expectations that teachers may hold.

Other professionals must also share knowledge with their colleagues and the public. This could be pursued through such avenues as journals, conferences and workshops. There is a need for information in all areas with respect to gifted/learning disabled students. Parents must also be made aware that they are not alone in their concerns and feelings and that they hold the power to influence school districts to provide appropriate programming.

Limitations of the Study

The pilot study for this project helped illuminate some of the limitations of this type of research. Specifically, the articulateness of the participants and their attempt to anticipate the answers that they felt the researcher was looking for, could have influenced the results of the pilot study. Even though there was an attempt to control those limitations in this current project, they may have continued to impact upon the results. In addition, there exist some other limitations. These are: 1) the use of a semi-structured interview format; 2) the assigning of themes to the paraphrased excerpts; and 3) the presence of the interviewer when gathering the data.

The decision to use a prearranged set of questions to guide the interviews may have tended to influence the conversation in certain directions. The use of these questions however, was necessary particularly for the children, it was obvious that discussing some of their feelings and thoughts in any depth was a difficult task. At times this seemed to be an inefficiency in being able to express themselves. At other times their reticence seemed to be more related to not having thought deeply or reflected on some of the issues in question. Consequently, there was a tendency to lead the subjects during the interview in order to allow them to be more articulate about their experiences. It should be noted however, that this consideration was foremost in the interviewer's mind at all times. Allowing the participants the opportunity to validate the results by discussing their reaction to the description of their experiences should also have helped to guard against misrepresented information.

A second limitation was the choice of themes assigned to the paraphrased excerpts. In some instances, it may seem to the reader that a variety of themes could have been assigned to a particular excerpt. This may be true; however, the context of the interview including the tone of the participant's voice and non-verbal communication generally suggested one theme over any others. The statement of the researcher's presuppositions should also help to illuminate any bias towards selecting one theme over another. Knowing the background and beliefs of the researcher should assist the reader in identifying those areas which the researcher might inadvertently choose over others. If the internal validity of this study is consistent, then another researcher using the same background information and beliefs as reference, should be able to assign similar themes to the abstracts. Unfortunately, this bias is an unavoidable limitation in this type of research.

The presence of the researcher at the interviews may have been a third limitation. The subjects may have been inhibited from speaking entirely freely about topics that are highly personal. Every attempt was made to establish rapport and indeed all interviews had a comfortable feeling. Information that may have been withheld, simply because it seemed unimportant to the participant, may have changed the profile of characteristics developed.

As with any research, there exist some limitations. In spite of these, this study was enlightening with respect to the many facets of the social/emotional development of the gifted/learning disabled.

Implications for Future Research

The potential for future research in the field of the gifted/learning disabled is great. Specifically with respect to social/emotional development, a study such as this would benefit from a follow-up using natural scientific or statistical methods. In this way, while gathering new information these results could be validated. Areas that require more investigation include: the impact of family relationships, the fear of failure, the effectiveness of interventions such as teaching coping skills, and peer interactions. It would also be interesting to determine at what point these children begin to develop their negative feelings and work habits. This information would have a great impact on designing the social/emotional component of an intervention program. Since this study dealt only with boys aged nine to twelve years, a similar study investigating the social/emotional development of girls would be useful. It cannot be assumed that girls would share the same experiences as boys.

Conclusions

Three major categories of themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews. These categories were interpersonal relationships, self concept and learning characteristics. While these gifted/learning disabled students posses many positive characteristics, they also describe themselves as having many negative feelings and work habits.

In spite of a number of limitations, this type of study is beneficial in illuminating the thoughts and feelings of these children, parents and teachers that may otherwise go unnoticed. It is imperative that educators and society as a whole come to terms with the seemingly contradictory characteristics of gifted/learning disabled students if we are to allow them to achieve their potential and be productive contributors to their community.

REFERENCES

Anastasiow, N. J. (1981). Socioemotional development: The state of the art. In N. J. Anastasiow, (Ed.), Socioemotional Development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Baum, S. (1984). Meeting the needs of learning disabled gifted students. Roeper Review, 7, 16-19.

Baum, S., & Kirschenbaum, R. (1984). Recognizing special talents in learning disabled students. Teaching Exceptional Children, 16, 92-98.

Blanton, G. (1984). Social and emotional development of learning disabled children. In W. Cruickshanks & J. M. Kliebhan (Eds), Early adolescence to early adulthood. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1982). Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods. Toronto: Allyn and Bacon.

Bricklin, P. M. (1983). Working with parents of learning-disabled/gifted children. In L. H. Fox, L. Brody, & D. Tobin (Eds.). Learning disabled/gifted children. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Bryan, T. (1974a). An observational analysis of classroom behaviour of children with learning disabilities. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 7, 26-34.

Bryan, T. (1974b). Peer popularity of learning disabled children. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 7, 621-625.

Bryan, T. (1976). Peer popularity of learning disabled children: a replication. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 9, 307-311.

Bryan, T. (1977). Learning disabled children's comprehension of nonverbal comprehension. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 10, 501-506.

Bryan, T. (1978). Social relationships and verbal interaction of learning disabled children. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 11, 107-115.

Bryan, T. H., Donahue, M., & Pearl, R. (1981). Learning disabled children's peer interactions during a small-group problem-solving task. Learning Disability Quarterly, 4, 13-22.

Busch-Rossnagel, N. A., & Vance, A. K. (1982). The impact of the school on social and emotional development. In B. Wolman (Ed.). Hanbook of developmental psychology. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Cartledge, G., & Milburn, J. F. (1978). The case for teaching social skills in the classroom: A review. Review of Educational Research, 481, 133-156.

Colaizzi, P. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. S. Valle & M. King (Eds.), Existential-phenomenological alternatives for psychology. New York: Oxford University Press.

Daniels, P. R. (1983). Teaching the gifted/learning disabled child. Rockville, Md: Aspen.

Davis, G. A., & Rimm, S. B. (1985). Education of the gifted and talented. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Dufrenne, M. (1967). Language and metaphysics. In N. Lawrence & D. O'Connor (Eds). Readings in existential phenomenology. Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc.

Feagans, L., & McKinney, J. (1981). The pattern of exceptionality across domains in learning disabled children. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 1, 313-328.

Fox, L. H. (1983). Gifted students with reading problems: An empirical study. In L. H. Fox, L. Brody, & D. Tobin (Eds.). Learning-disabled/gifted children. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Fox, L. H., Brody, L., & Tobin, D. (1983). Future directions for research and practice. In L. H. Fox, L. Brody, & D. Tobin (Eds.). Learning disabled/gifted children. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Gallagher, J. (1983). The adaptation of gifted programming for learning-disabled students. In L. H. Fox, L. Brody, & D. Tobin (Eds). Learning-disabled/gifted children. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Goertzel, M., & Goertzel, V. (1962). Cradles of eminence. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

Gold, M J. (1965). Education of the intellectually gifted. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books.

Gunderson, C. W., Maesch, C., & Rees, J. W. (1987). The gifted/learning disabled student. Gifted Child Quarterly, 31, 158-160.

Hoffman, B. (1979). What type of education would Einstein have wanted for gifted children? Gifted/Creative/Talented, 9, 56.

Jacobs, J. C. (1972). Teacher attitudes towards gifted children. Gifted Child Quarterly, 16, 23-26.

Janos, P. M., Fung, H., & Robinson, N. (1985). Self concept, self esteem & peer relations among gifted children who feel "different". Gifted Child Quarterly, 29, 78-82.

Kaufman, A. S. (1976). A new approach to the interpretation of test scatter on the WISC-R. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 9, 33-41.

Kruger, D. (1979). An introduction to phenomenological psychology. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Lehman, E. B., & Erdwins, C. J. (1981). The social and emotional adjustment of young intellectually gifted children. Gifted Child Quarterly, 25, 134-137.

Lerner, J. (1981). Learning Disabilites: Theories, Diagnosis & Teaching Strategies, (3rd Ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Maker, C. J. (1977). Providing programs for the gifted handicapped. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Mauser, A. (1980). Learning disability in gifted children. ACLD Newsbriefs, 130.

Meichenbaum, D. H. (1975). A self-instructional approach to stress management. In C. Spielberger & I. Sarason (Eds.). Stress and Anxiety (Vol. 2). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Meisgeiger, C., Meisgeiger, C. & Werblo, D. (1978). Factors compounding the handicapping of some gifted children. Gifted Child Quarterly, 22, 325-331.

Minner, S., Prater, G., Bloodworth, H., & Walker, S. (1987). Referral and placement recommendations of teachers towards gifted handicapped children. Roeper Review, 9, 247-249.

Novaco, R. (1978). Anger and coping with stress. In J. Foreyt & D. Rathjen (Eds.). Cognitive behaviour therapy, theory, research and procedures. New York: Plenum Press.

Orton, S. (1937). Reading, writing and speech problems in children. New York: W. W. Norton.

Porter, R. M. (1982). The gifted handicapped: a status report. Roeper Review, 4, 24-25.

Pyryt, M. C. (1979). Inner-city students' perceptions of the gifted. Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 2, 99-105.

Rawson, M. (1968). Developmental language disability. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press.

Renzulli, J. S. (1977). The enrichment trial model: A guide for developing defensible programs for the gifted and talented. Wethersfield: Creative Learning Press.

Renzulli, J. & Hartman, R. (1971). Scale for rating behaviour characteristics of superior students. Exceptional Children, 38, 243-248.

Rist, R. C. (1970). Student social class and teacher expectations: The self-fulfilling prophecy in ghetto expectations. Harvard Educational Review, 40, 411-451.

Schiff, M. M., Kaufman, A. S., & Kaufman, N. L. (1981). Scatter analysis of WISC-R profiles for learning disabled children with superior intelligence. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 14, 400-404.

Senf, G. M. (1983). The nature and identification of learning disabilities and their relationship to the gifted child. In L. H. Fox, L. Brody, & D. Tobin (Eds.). Learning-disabled/gifted children - Identification and programming. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Siegel, E. (1974). The exceptional child grows up. New York: E. P. Dutton.

Suran, B. & Rizzo, J. (1979). Special children: An integrative approach. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Co.

Suter, D. P., & Wolf, J. (1987). Issues in the identification and programming of the gifted/learning disabled child. 10, 227-237.

Telford, C. & Sawrey, J. (1977). *The exceptional individual*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Terman, L. M. & Oden, M H. (1925). *Mental & physical traits of a thousand gifted children*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Udall, A. J. & Maker, C. J. (1983). A pilot program for elementary-age learning/disabled gifted children. In L. H. Fox, L. Brody, & D. Tobin (Eds.). *Learning-disabled/gifted children*. Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.

Valle, R. S., & King, M. (1978). An introduction to existential-phenomenological thought in psychology. In R. S. Valle & M. King (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological alternatives for psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wertz, F. J. (1986). The question of the reliability of psychological research. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, *17*, 181-205.

Weschler, D. (1974). *Manual for Weschler intelligence scale for children - revised*. New York: Psycological Corporation.

Weill, M. P. (1987). Gifted/learning disabled students. *The Clearing House*, *60*, 341-343.

Whitmore, J. R. (1981). Gifted children with handicapping conditions: A new frontier. *Exceptional Children*, *48*, 106-114.

Whitmore, J. R. (1988). Gifted children at risk for learning difficulties. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, *20*, 10-14.

Winzer, M., Rogow, S. & David, C. (1987). *Exceptional children in Canada*. Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Can. Inc.

Wolf, J., & Gygi, J. (1981). Learning disabled and gifted: Success or failure? *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *4*, 199-206.

Yewchuk, C. (1985). Gifted/learning disabled children: An overview. *Gifted Education International*, *3*, 122-26.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Parent and Teacher Interviews

In what areas does he feel good about himself? How does he demonstrate this?

In what areas does he feel badly about himself? How does he demonstrate this?

Would you describe him as an independent or a dependent child? Why?

When he is successful at a task, how does he account for this success?

When he is unsuccessful at a task, how does he account for this?

How does he react to praise?

How would you describe his sense of humour?

What are his ambitions for himself?

Does he expect too little or too much of himself?

Would you describe him as an anxious child? How does he demonstrate this anxiety?

When attempting a new or difficult task, how would you describe his level of motivation?

Is he critical of himself in a constructive manner?

Does he think before he acts? Can you give an example? Does he ever get himself into trouble by being impulsive?

Is he able to stay with an activity for an extended period of time. With what kinds of activities does this happen?

Does he become frustrated easily? How does he show this frustration?

How does he react in socially unfamiliar situation...with strangers?

How would you describe your relationship with him (How would you describe his relationship with his parents)?

How do you deal with your feelings about the discrepancies in his abilities (How do his parents deal with their feelings about the discrepancies in his abilities)?

What type of comments does he make about his teachers (As a teacher, what are your feelings about him)? Are these feelings consistent with past teachers? What do other teachers say about him?

Doe she make friends easily? What type of children does he choose as friends? Can he maintain his friendships? Is he a leader or a follower?

Does he usually act in a socially appropriate manner?

Have you ever felt that he has difficulty interpreting non-verbal behaviour such as body language, gestures and facial expressions?

Compared to your other children (the other children in your class), is there a marked difference in your mind between their social/emotional development and his?

Student Interview

What are some things at which you are good? How do you feel when you are doing those things?

What are some things at which you are not so good? How do you feel when you are doing those things?

How does is it make you feel to be really good at some things, and not so good at other things?

Do you like to do things on your own? What things? Why or why not?

When you do something very well, why does it turn out that way?

When you do something badly, why does it turn out that way?

How do you feel when someone tells you that you have done something well?

Do you have a good sense of humour? What kinds of things do you think are funny?

What would you like to be when you get older?

Do you think you expect too little or too much of yourself? Why or why not?

What things make you feel anxious or nervous? How do you act when you feel this way?

How do you feel when you are trying something new or difficult?

When you have finished a job, do you usually think that you have done a good job...or do you usually think that you could have done better? Why?

Do you ever get into trouble by doing things without thinking about them?

Do you find it hard to stay with an activity for a long time? What kinds of activities?

What kinds of things frustrate you? How do you act when you feel this way?

How do you feel and act when you are with strangers?

How do you get along with your parents?

What do your parents think about your school work?

What do you think about your teachers? What do you think about teachers you have had in the past? Do your teachers like you?

Tell me about your best friend. Do you make friends easily? What kinds of children do you like to have as friends? When you are playing with your friends, who usually decides what you are going to do?

Do you ever have trouble knowing what people mean when they aren't talking to you...when they give you a look?

Do you think you are different from other children? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B

Appendix B

THEMATIC ABSTRACTION OF ANDREW'S EXPERIENCE

Excerpt	Paraphrase	Theme
Andrew's Interview (1-19)		
1. (It turns out well) cause I know what to do...it's the thing I can do.	acknowledges control over own success	internal locus of control for success
2. (It turns out bad because) I might have a bad day or something like that. I stayed up too late or I got hurt or something like that.	realizes that he has an effect on his failure	internal locus of control for failure
3. (I want to be) an artist...a cartoon artist	defines long term goal	planful or organized behaviour
4. Maybe on school work, I can try harder.	evaluates own progress	positive self criticism
5. I get butterflies.	acknowledges feelings	self awareness
6. Well I say I can do it.	confidence in self	self confidence
7. It (hard or new things) makes me kind of worry.	acknowledges feelings	self awareness
8. Fights...at school, like someone pushed me and I hit them and then....	reacts to situations physically	impulsivity
9. I don't need lots of breaks.	acknowledges learning needs	self awareness

10. That like in a test, I get a low mark (frustrates me).	acknowledges feelings	self awareness
11. I think I can do better than I did.	evaluates own performance	positive self criticism
12. Well I talk about when I have a test. I tell them I got the mark and then they say that's good.	acknowledges parental support	positve parental interaction
13. They say you have to try harder.	indicates parental encouragement	positive parental interaction
14. (I like my teacher) cause he takes us on trips and helps us.	enjoys relationship with teacher	positive teacher interaction
15. (The teachers say) that he's (I'm) good.	acknowledges teacher support	positive teacher interaction
16. I usually help the teachers and stuff.	enjoys helping teacher	positive teacher interaction
17. He (my best friend) does what we like. We skate and we both play hockey.	has common interests with friends	positive peer interaction
18. (I like) people that do, like stuff that I do.	acknowledges social needs	self awareness
19. I like sports. I like to play hockey.	enjoys physical activities	self awareness

Andrew's Mother's Interview (20-68)

20. (He feels good) in sports basically and at home.	feels good about sports and family	positive self image

21.	He's good at them and that's what he talks about. He talks about them.	verbalizes things he feels good about	positive self image
22.	(He doesn't like) anything that requires too much reading or writing.	does not enjoy reading or writing	negative academic self concept
23.	When he was even much younger, we used to try and read to him, or make him read, or anything to do with language arts, he used to cry. He didn't like it at all.	feels upset when reading	negative academic self concept
24.	He'll tolerate it (reading) because he has no choice.	persists with unpleasant tasks	perseverance
25.	It (reading) makes him annoyed.	feels angry when reading	negative academic self concept
26.	He's dependent. He uses that alot.	relies on others	dependence
27.	(He thinks he's successful because) he tried hard.	acknowledges control over own success	internal locus of control for success
28.	He doesn't talk about it (failure) very much. He dismisses it or ignores it...he feels uncomfortable about it.	has difficulty dealing with failure	fear of failure
29.	He'll find his excuses but it's usually somebody else's fault, not his.	blames others for failure	external locus of control for failure
30.	He has very high ambitions.	has high expectations	self confidence

31. He also realizes that he has to work doubly hard because he can't read as well as anybody else.	recognizes his problems impact on his achievement	self awareness
32. He does not put that (not reading) as an obstacle to being... whatever he chooses for himself.	believes in himself	self confidence
33. He has not even considered trades for himself.	has high expectations	self confidence
34. Running his own business is what he wants to do.	defines long term goal	planful or organized behaviour
35. He says I could invent this, Mom.	recognizes own talents	self confidence
36. I think he puts himself at odds where he really wants to perfect stuff and himself too.	causes himself stress by being a perfectionist	unrealistic expectations
37. He really expects too much of himself.	has unreasonably high expectations	unrealistic expectations
38. He just keeps on going it seems. If he totally fails at something, then he will be down for awhile but then he seems to pick himself up.	able to persist with difficult taks	perseverance
39. For something that's totally new to him, he will have a sleepless night. He'll be excited and he'll ask us a thousand questions. Until he feels comfortable. But he will go. He will try new things.	does not avoid new situations	perseverance

40. Eleventh hour Andrew.	leaves tasks until the last minute	lack of planful or organized behaviour
41. He tends to think he is good. He is confident in himself and he's never puts himself down.	believes that he is able to succeed	self confidence
42. He's never said to us I'm no good, I can't do it.	does not make negative comments about self	positive self image
43. He never causes anything according to him.	not responsible for own behaviour	external locus of control for failure
44. If he's going to go and play and do something, he will go right ahead and do it without planning too much.	acts without thinking	impulsivity
45. If he's going to build something which he likes to do, then he'll plan.	thinks out projects before beginning	planful or organized behaviour
46. Like models and stuff, he'll stay with that till he's finished.	works on things he enjoys for extended periods of time	inconsistent attention span
47. Anything to do with school work you have to really pound at it because his attention span for certain things are very, very short.	has difficulty concentrating on things he does not like	inconsistent attention span
48. You know he'll throw up his arms...but he usually goes back to what he's doing.	persists with difficult tasks	perseverance

49. I would say he gets frustrated easily.	has low treshold for frustration	frustration
50. If I'd let him sit there, I think he'd sit there and not worry till Mom or Dad comes and helps him.	relies on others for help	dependence
51. He does make friends easily.	able to develop friendships	positive peer interaction
52. He can go unnoticable in a crowd but he always usually ends up meeting people, knowing people.	able to interact socially	positive social skills
53. We discovered he had problems at an early age.	parents recognized academic problems	positive parental interaction
54. I was hoping to correct alot of it as time went by but that's Andrew.	parental acceptance of problems	positive parental interaction
55. He's never had any problems with teachers.	gets along well with teachers	positive teacher interaction
56. He's always liked his teachers and I've never had any problems with them not liking him.	likes teachers and is liked by them	positive teacher interaction
57. We're trying to make the best thing for him.	parents are supportive	positive parental interaction
58. It seems he gets along everywhere. He doesn't seem to irk somebody or rub them the wrong way or anything.	knows how to act appropriately	positive social skills

59. The core of friends he has are here on the street. Those are basically the kids he grew up with. Even though they go to different schools and have different interests they still all stick together.	able to maintain friendships	positive peer interaction
60. (His friends are) mixed but basically his peers.	chooses friends from his peer group	positive peer interaction
61. A follower, definitely.	relies on other people	dependence
62. He's really concerned about them (his brothers) when they're somewhere and he doe not feel comfortable where they are, then he'll make sure he goes to find out what they're doing, or where they are or if they're safe.	feels protective towards siblings	positive sibling interaction
63. Him and his dad can talk with each other in body language.	able to communicate with body language	positive non verbal skills
64. If you frown at him, then he knows.	able to interpret facial expressions	positive non verbal skills
65. He can tell if he's said the right thing or the wrong thing.	able to interpret reactions	positive non verbal skills
66. They've asked him to represent the group and he's done really, really well.	acts as a role model	positive self image

67. I think in that group he really enjoys himself because...he's able to lead the group.	enjoys assuming leadership role	independence
68. There he can be a little bit more outstanding than here in this neighbourhood.	enjoys recognition	positive self image

Andrew's Teacher's Interview (69-105)

69. (He feels good about) phys. ed. very much soo...art.	feels good about sports and art	positive self image
70. He's excited and he participates.	demonstrates that he feels good	positive self worth
71. Reluctance to do it is the big one. He tends to get ancy or act out sometimes with the other kids (when doing things he doesn't like).	seeks attention from peers when doing things he does not like	negative attention seeking behaviour
72. He quite often seeks out his own solution to problems.	is resourceful in problem solving	independence
73. He really insists that you look at it and he's proud of showing it off.	seeks recognition from teacher	positive attention seeking behaviour
74. He'll often blame it on the task rather than take responsibility for it.	does not assume responsibility for actions	external locus of control for failure
75. It's very important to him (praise) but I find he doesn't demonstrate with a beaming reaction to it.	reacts appropriately to praise	positive attention seeking behaviour
76. He's sharp. He picks up on things and he listens enough.	is intuitive about social situations	positive social skills

77. He's also very good at non-verbals.	able to use non verbal communication	positive non verbal skills
78. He can get to the point where he's willing to accept less than what he's able to do and that is when it's pointed out to him and then he rebounds and works harder.	persists with a task when encouraged	perseverance
79. If it's something he's interested in, then he's very much a perfectionist.	has overly high expectations for things he enjoys	unrealistic expectations
80. In areas where he again feels frustrated, he will react in a way that's like let's get this over with.	avoids difficult situations	precipitance/ avoidance
81. If it's a successful area and it's a good day, he's completely absorbed in it.	can concentrate for extended periods of time on activities he enjoys	inconsistent attention span
82. He finds it difficult to sit quietly and listen or to be read to.	has difficulty with quiet tasks	inconsistent attention span
83. He will be inclined to leave it and go back to something he's comfortable with.	avoids difficult tasks	precipitance/ avoidance
84. If it's something he's really positive about, he will be critical about it.	able to evaluate strengths	positive self criticism
85. I think he tends to put himself down too much.	makes negative comments about self	negative self criticism

86.	He's critical of himself and not necessarily in a constructive way either.	makes negative comments about self	negative self criticism
87.	I think when he gets impulsive it's because he's frustrated.	acts impulsively when frustrated	frustration
88.	If we're talking about peer relationships or how he gets through his day, he has his impulsive moments.	acts impulsively with peers	impulsivity
89.	He seeks out attention from other kids...just the jab or the poke... then the resentment builds up in the other kids and he pays for that impulsiveness somewhere down the course of the day.	seeks attention from peers inappropriately	negative attention seeking behaviour
90.	He does have the capacity to work hard at it...if it's something he feels he wants to do.	is able to maintain attention when interested	inconsistent attention span
91.	On his own I'd say he gets frustrated fairly quickly.	low threshold for frustration	frustration
92.	With someone else with him, he'll sweat it through because he's sure that he won't have to flounder if he reaches a problem.	relies on others to help him with difficult problems	dependence
93.	He picks up very much on the mood around him.	sensitive to feelings and actions of others.	positive non verbal skills

94.	He went there all by himself and forced himself in a group that he'd never seen before.	persists when confronted with new situations	perseverance
95.	I think he's developing this confidence, this self assuredness.	belief in own abilities increasing	self confidence
96.	They're (his parents) very accepting of the difficulty he has...I don't think they're unrealistic at all about it.	parents accept problem and have realistic expectations	positive parental interaction
97.	There's nothing malicious about the boy. He's a good hearted kid.	viewed positively by teacher	positive teacher interaction
98.	He's made some friends in there.	able to develop friendships	positive peer interaction
99.	The kids he hangs around with are not only his own age, they're at his own sort oflevel. He doesn't hang around with kids he sees as being kind of silly or foolish or dumb or whatever.	seeks out friends who are similiar	positive peer interaction
100.	It's got to be the brighter kids in the group. I think he sees himself that way.	identifies with positive role models	positive self image
101.	It seems that the friends he's had for a while he sticks with.	maintains friendships	positive peer interaction
102.	Actually his social skills are quite well developed, quite positive.	is aware of appropriate behaviour	positive social skills

103.	When he gets into mischief or there's stupid things, he knows the boundaries and that isn't often.	is aware of expectations of him	positive social skills
104.	When he's around adults, when he's around kids, when he's around certain situations, he knows how to conduct himself.	is aware of appropriate behaviour	positive social skills
105.	Non-verbals I'd say he's very strong at. He exhibits them quite freely and genuinely and he responds to them too.	demonstrates and interprets non verbal behaviour	positive non verbal skills

APPENDIX C

Appendix C

THEMATIC ABSTRACTION OF ADAM'S EXPERIENCE

Excerpt	Paraphrase	Theme
Adam's Interview (1-25)		
1. Math, gym, lunch, recess, free time (are things I feel good about).	acknowledges strengths	positive self image
2. If I have to do something that I don't want, like study my spelling, then I don't feel really happy.	difficult tasks cause sadness	sadness
3. Soccer, reading (are things I don't feel good about).	acknowledges weaknesses	self awareness
4. Sometimes it (hard things) makes me want to try harder and sometimes I just get all upset.	mixed reactions to doing difficult tasks	frustration
5. If I have a headache sometimes I just get all sick and I don't feel well and all that and the whole thing doesn't work.	realizes he has an effect on failure	internal locus of control for failure
6. It's just like it doesn't get my attention. It's boring.	things that are uninteresting are boring	boredom
7. Things that I don't know how to do (I like to do with someone else).	seeks help	dependence

8.	(Things turn out well) cause I have a good attitude to it and sometimes just because I enjoy it.	acknowledges control over own success	internal locus of control for success
9.	(Things don't turn out well) maybe because of the attitude, maybe how I'm feeling towards it.	acknowledges own feelings affect failure	internal locus of control for failure
10.	No (my teacher doesn't tell me I do things well).	unhappy with lack of teacher approval	negative teacher interaction
11.	Sort of (wish she would tell me more often).	desires teacher approval	negative teacher interaction
12.	Sometimes I just don't want to go (to school).	wants to avoid school	negative academic self concept
13.	My attitude is lower (when I'm feeling anxious).	acknowledges feelings	self awareness
14.	Sometimes I just fall asleep in class.	disinterested in what is happening at school	negative academic self concept
15.	I can concentrate for a long time.	able to stay with a task	inconsistent attention span
16.	When somebody calls me names (I feel mad).	reacts to teasing with anger	anger
17.	(I feel mad when) I'm reading and I stop at words.	reacts to difficulties with reading with anger	anger
18.	I usually just ignore them.	tries to deny anger	anger

19. Sometimes I just go punch in a wall. Sometimes I just kick something.	reacts to anger physically	physical response
20. (I get along with my parents) so-so, sometimes not.	mixed reactions to parents	negative parental interaction
21. Sometimes when my dad is frustrated and you say something and he goes...or my mom, you know, the same thing.	feels parents take frustration out on him	negative parental interaction
22. (I get along with my teacher) so-so.	mixed reaction to teacher	negative teacher interaction
23. They (past teachers) understand me better.	indicates support from past teachers	positive teacher interaction
24. Some do, some don't (teachers like me).	feels teachers have mixed feelings towards him	negative teacher interaction
25. I really don't have one (a best friend).	lacks friends	negative peer interaction

Adam's Parents' Interview (26-91)

26. Probably not alot in the last little while (feels good).	generally unhappy	negative self image
27. He feels really good in art.	enjoys doing art	positive self image
28. (He feels badly about) school generally.	does not enjoy school	negative academic self concept
29. The kids teasing him.	other children call him names	negative peer interaction

30.	He's only really verbalized his feelings about it (teasing) to us really clearly in the last six or eight months.	beginning to acknowledge own feelings to others	self awareness
31.	He's very resourceful... I would say he's very independent.	able to solve own problems	independence
32.	He's very independent in playing as well. Not atypical for an only child but he's quite capable of entertaining himself for very long periods of time.	able to play by himself for extended periods of time	independence
33.	The most ever I think that I've ever heard him say in that sort of context (success) was "I was really interested in it" or "I enjoyed doing it".	acknowledges control over own success	internal locus of control for success
34.	He's been made to feel not very good about himself.	is not praised by others	negative self image
35.	He does not admit failure.	avoids discussing failure	fear of failure
36.	He sets extremely high standards for himself and he can't meet them all the time and it frustrates him.	frustrates himself by setting too high goals	unrealistic expectations
37.	He sort of avoids talking about failure.	avoids discussing failure	fear of failure

38.	He needs to be encouraged to keep moving in a certain direction. It's a question of don't set unrealistic goals for yourself.	needs guidance to avoid setting too high goals	unrealistic expectations
39.	I would say an excellent sense of humour.	finds humour in things	positive self image
40.	Sometimes he can see in a situation something that perhaps even an adult can't see.	is intuitive beyond his years	maturity
41.	I think occasionally he gets into a bit of trouble with other children because he can zero in on something.	maturity causes difficulty with peers	negative peer
42.	Whether it be an formal test or informal sort of test, he has a very, very high anxiety level.	reacts to testing situations with anxiety	negative academic self concept
43.	He tends to get silent (when he's anxious).	withdraws when anxious	anxiety
44.	Either that or else he starts to get weepy or he goes to tears.	cries when he is upset	crying
45.	Sometimes he's having trouble and taking three or four cracks at it... he starts blocking and he starts to almost panic.	loses control when doing difficult tasks	fear of failure
46.	He starts to think he's not going to be able to handle it and he'll get a shortness of breath.	reacts physically to stress	physical response

47.	Whenever he starts to feel that there's a probablity of failure, the fear of failure takes over and he'll head straight forward in a downward spiral.	tends to react negatively when anticipating fear	fear of failure
48.	He says "Why bother? This is just a bunch of junk. I'm not going to learn it anyway. I'm just wasting my time".	feels frustrated when doing difficult tasks	frustration
49.	He starts to fumble with a word, the fear of failure sort of takes over and he just panics.	loses control when doing difficult tasks	fear of failure
50.	He loses control over it and whenever he's facing tasks that hold fear or holds things that he doubts for himself, he basically panics.	loses control when doing difficult tasks	fear of failure
51.	The other way (he shows anxiety) is becoming haughty and indicating that it's getting to him and it doesn't matter anyway.	tries to deny importance of things that make him anxious	anxiety
52.	He would like to avoid it (difficult things) if possible in many situations.	tends to avoid difficult situations	precipitance /avoidance
53.	He will come home and sit down to his homework without ever being reminded.	accepts responsibility for school work	independence
54.	He's smart enough to know that if I don't face it now, I'm going to have to face it later.	persists with difficult tasks that must be completed	perseverance

55. Very, very much so (self critical) especially towards school.	is critical in an unconstructive manner about school	negative self concept
56. Sometimes about friends (self critical	feels responsible for lack of friends	negative self concept
57. Even sometimes about things that are relative successes (self critical).	cannot accept own successes	negative self concept
58. He tends to be Mr. Negative quite a bit.	generally overly self critical	negative self concept
59. For a nine year old he's pretty mature in terms of his behaviour.	acts in a mature manner	maturity
60. In terms of following the rules, he's pretty good.	accepts authority	positive social skills
61. There's a little policeman in his head I think that operates during his waking hours.	monitors own behaviour	positive social skills
62. "I could have just throttled the kid but I knew if I did...I stopped myself".	able to control impulses	reflection
63. He has an impulsive manner when he's under stress.	reacts without thinking when under stress	physical response
64. (He becomes frustrated easily) with academic things.	loses patience with school tasks	frustration

65.	He'll be able to work on manipulative things with his hands, crafts, things like that and he doesn't (become frustrated).	able to persist with activities he enjoys	perseverance
66.	He seems to become frustrated in daily living types of situations.	loses patience with common situations	frustration
67.	If he's really frustrated he tends to dissolve into tears.	reacts emotionally when upset	crying
68.	He can be a bit of a terror at times.	seeks attention through inappropriate behaviour	negative attention seeking behaviour
69.	Sometimes he behaves in an attention seeking way.	seeks attention through inappropriate behaviour	negative attention seeking behaviour
70.	Other times he can be very adult, very charming and offer someone a cup of tea.	able to act in a very mature manner	maturity
71.	His attention seeking behaviour tends to be more often the case when there are other kids his age there than when there are just other adults.	seeks attention from peers by misbehaving	negative attention seeking behaviour
72.	I think he tends to look at me with anything that resembles criticism or judgement in a very negative way.	rejects criticism from father	negative parental interaction
73.	If you listen to him, I'm always yelling at him and yet I never yell at him.	misinterprets father's actions	negative parental interaction

74. He has an inordinate desire to please which makes it hard for him to accept criticism.	desires others' approval	negative self image
75. He's not very happy with his teacher this year.	dislikes teacher	negative teacher interaction
76. He has memories of that year and that particular person (past teacher) that are not positive.	has bad memories of past teachers	negative teacher
77. His feelings towards his teacher this year are extremely negative and they're the most negative they have ever been.	rejects teacher	negative teacher interaction
78. "When I try to talk to her about something important, she doesn't show any respect for me".	feels teacher does not like him	negative teacher interation
79. He can interact with children on a really superficial level.	cannot develop relationships with peers	negative peer interation
80. He does that reasonably easily but in terms of forming friendships, I would say no.	cannot develop relationships with peers	negative peer interation
81. "I just get things started and someone comes along and messes it up. I just start to trust someone and then they tease me".	anticipates rejection by peers	negative peer interaction
82. He doesn't have a sort of circle of friends.	does not maintain friendships	negative peer interaction

83. He's not satisified with his relationship with friends...or with the number or friends.	desires more and better relationships with peers	negative peer interaction
84. He never passes up the opportunity (of playing with someone) for fear that there won't come another one.	fears rejection by peers	fear of failure
85. He wants to be the leader. He likes to take command of the situation in terms of play situations.	desires to be in position of power with peers	seeking control
86. I would say he is not the type of child who would follow quietly either.	does not take directions from peers	weak social skills
87. He's not a charismatic personality and it wouldn't excite people to follow him.	does not project leadership	weak social skills
88. He is still a bit babyish and cries.	cries when upset	crying
89. He will is he's injured put on these great performances like it's the end of the world.	seeks attention when hurt	negative attention behaviour
90. The other kids manipulate him.	can be controlled by other children	negative peer interaction
91. It seems he's pretty perceptive about what's going on around here.	able to interpret moods	positive non-verbal skills

Adam's Teacher's Interview (92-131)

92. I would say he comes across as being a happy kid but...it seems like there's always an underlying current of unhappiness.	does not project true feelings	negative self image
93. He felt frustrated with alot of things he was doing in school because it was so difficult for him.	loses patience with school tasks	frustration
94. He wasn't all that comfortable or excited about doing things with his peers.	tends to avoid peers	negative peer interaction
95. I don't know if he felt alot of it (school) was benefiting him at all.	feels school was not worthwhile	negative academic self concept
96. If it was a peer situation, he would get quite angry and show short tempers (when he was unhappy).	loses temper with peers when upset	anger
97. Or he would just remove himself, become a real introvert and tended to stick to himself.	tends to withdraw when upset	physical response
98. He looked for alot of attention from adults.	seeks attention from adults	negative attention seeking behaviour
99. He was also looking for attention from just about everybody else including office staff and teacher aides and people in the playground.	seeks attention from everyone	negative attention seeking behaviour

100.	I don't think I ever noticed him ever verbalizing something in a positive sense in that way (future plans).	does not think positively of future	negative attention seeking behaviour
101.	(When he was frustrated) he would become very teary or get really like almost physically tensed up about it.	physical reaction to frustration	physical response
102.	A sense of humour that more adults could relate to.	understands humour beyond age level	maturity
103.	I've had some kids say things like I really don't understand alot of what he says.	peers find him difficult to understand	negative peer interaction
104.	I would have to encourage him to try and at the same time he would get frustrated because he wasn't showing the ability to do what I think he felt he should be able to do.	conflict over discrepancy between ability and achievement	frustration
105.	He did want to participate and yet he would captivate attention, usually on topic but then he would go into all different areas as soon as he had your attention.	tends to dominate discussions	negative attention seeking behaviour
106.	He tends to avoid difficult situations for him.	avoids difficult situations	precipitance/ avoidance
107.	It's not an inspiring sort of thing for him to get keyed up about (challenge).	does not find difficult tasks challenging	boredom

108.	Nothing seems to really challenge him.	is generally disinterested	boredom
109.	I found him being critical to a point that it was defeating in the classroom.	not critical in constructive manner of academic tasks	negative self criticism
110.	"I need your help here as often as I can get it from you" and he really wanted it almost 99% of the time if he could get it.	seeks help when not needed	dependence
111.	He tended to allow himself to become very, very overwhelmed when he didn't need to be.	allows frustration to take over	fear of failure
112.	I think the impulsiveness showed up more with peer interactions.	tends to act without thinking with peers	negative peer interaction
113.	If he's doing something that he's capable of doing, he would stay with it for quite a long period of time.	able to stay with an activity for an extended period of time	inconsistent attention span
114.	If he had a really extra busy week...by the end of the week he was really showing a shorter threshold for getting along or even just any involvement in anything.	tends to become angry when tired	anger
115.	If the strangers were adults, he always felt alot more comfortable.	relates well with adults	maturity

116. I think if the strangers were kids or peers, he didn't really seem to be affected that much because he just ignored them.	avoids unfamiliar situations	weak social skills
117. He felt alot more comfortable with adults.	relates well with adults	maturity
118. I saw him as being very manipulative with them (his parents).	seeks to control his parents	negative parental interaction
119. On a personal level with him, I quite enjoy his humour and his personality. I found that in the class he tends to become a bit aggrevating.	causes anxiety in teacher	negative teacher interaction
120. He tends to aggrevate the other children.	causes anxiety in peers	negative peer interaction
121. He does have a really difficult time with the social part of it.	finds social situations frustrating	weak social skills
122. He certainly relates well with adults and I can see him making good friends with young adults.	enjoys adult company	maturity
123. It's not total dislike but they do not establish any close friendships and I think that really bothered Adam.	does not develop friendships	negative peer interaction
124. I would hear him kind of say "I'd like to have somebody phone here".	wants to have more friends	negative peer interaction

125. He really would have liked to (have friends) but they certainly didn't develop into anything bonding or permanent.	does not develop friendships	negative peer interaction
126. In most peer interactions he tends to be a follower.	does not assume leadership position	dependence
127. He does tend to like to lead.	wants to assume leadership position	seeking control
128. When you've got him in a group, he tends to be a real follower...like he likes to be involved in that but on the peripheral areas.	involves himself only in a superficial sense	dependence
129. He wants to be able to control a situation quickly and completely.	wants to assume leadership position	seeking control
130. I think he tends to ignore some of the non-verbal stuff.	chooses not to consider non-verbal information	weak social skills
131. He's learning to master alot of manipulative type skills and most of these kids have no clue about some of those things.	wants to control peers	seeking control

APPENDIX D

Appendix D

THEMATIC ABSTRACTION OF MICHAEL'S EXPERIENCE

Excerpt	Paraphrase	Theme
Michael's Interview (1-36)		
1. I'm really good at soccer, hockey in a way and football	acknowledges strengths	positive self image
2. I just try my hardest to be the best.	imagines self as successful	positive self image
3. I'm not so good at baseball...running... writing stories.	acknowledges weaknesses	self awareness
4. I can think them all up but I can't write down on paper.	frustration over inability to express ideas in writing	negative academic self concept
5. I feel like I'm a failure.	overwhelmed by inability to do academic tasks	negative academic self concept
6. She (the teacher) says you can do it.	encouragement from teacher	positive teacher interaction
7. (It turns out well) because I guess you really tried for it.	acknowledges control over own successes	internal locus of control for success
8. (It doesn't turn out well) because you maybe didn't listen to instructions or you just didn't want to do it.	acknowledges one's actions have affect on failure	internal locus of control for failure

9. I make everybody laugh.	sees self as humourous	self awareness
10. (I want to be) an army man...a SWAT team.	defines long term goal	planful or organized behaviour
11. I like doing daring things.	believes in own abilities	self-confidence
12. I just maybe think I'm going to do something and be real good at it so they get me hired.	believes will be rewarded for efforts	self-confidence
13. Maybe asking my friends for help because maybe they've done it before.	seeks help from friends	planful or organized behaviour
14. I guess (I expect) too much of myself.	sets unattainable goals	unrealistic expectations
15. Cause I always push myself to do things that I really can't.	sets unattainable goals	unrealistic expectations
16. I don't really like having homework. So then I push myself. Sometimes I make it. Sometimes I don't.	persists with tasks that are disliked	perseverance
17. I say "Why couldn't you do that?"	critical of inabilities	negative self criticism
18. I get anxious when I feel something's up.	reacts to uncertainity by becoming anxious	anxiety
19. I feel like I can do it but I need some help.	seeks help only when needed	self-confidence
20. I could have done better.	not satisfied with products	negative self criticism
21. I just jump right into them.	acts without thinking	impulsivity

22.	He was fighting so I jumped right into him..	acts without thinking	impulsivity
23.	I like to have lots of breaks unless it's really fun.	activity determines attention span	inconsistent attention span
24.	I can just go on and on.	able to stay with activity for extended period of time	inconsistent attention span
25.	Like when you're really trying to put something together and it won't fit in, it really makes me mad.	becomes angry when frustrated	anger
26.	I feel like I just want to break it up. I just want to destroy the thing.	reacts physically when angry	physical response
27.	I just throw that away and do something else.	gives up when frustrated	precipitance/ avoidance
28.	Like if he was doing weird stuff and all that, I'd say well maybe he's just scared or something.	interprets behaviour of others	positive non-verbal skills
29.	Adults are different... cause they can yell at you.	feels intimidated by adults	negative interaction with adults
30.	(My teacher is) nice, real nice.	enjoys teacher's company	positive teacher interaction
31.	She (teacher) gives us fun things to do.	enjoys activities given by the teacher	positive teacher interaction

32.	Like maybe there's bigger kids and they're in a higher grade and they haven't failed. I feel like I'm a failure.	compares failures to other's successes	negative academic self concept
33.	I get real down.	feels unhappy	sadness
34.	I feel it's the best class you can be in.	believes special class is helpful	positive teacher interaction
35.	I'm funny.	acknowledges strengths	self-awareness
36.	I'm easy to get along with.	sees self as cooperative	self-awareness

Michael's Parents' Interview (37-76)

37.	He certainly has a great sense of humour.	able to see humour in situations	positive self image
38.	I believe he is self assured when he's with his friends.	feels comfortable with peers	self-confidence
39.	He talks about them (the things he feels good about).	demonstrates that he feels good	positive self image
40.	The one thing that upsets him more than anything else is they keep telling him how smart he is and yet he doesn't...grasp as fast as someone else does.	feels conflict over discrepancy between ability and achievement	frustration
41.	He gets frustrated... he gets angry.	demonstrates frustration through anger	anger
42.	"Why should I have to do it a second time? Even though it's wrong, I don't want to do it because I won't get it right the second time".	abondons tasks when uncertain of success	fear of failure

43. He's not a loner or anything.	interacts with others	positive social skills
44. He needs people around all the time, whether it be peers or grown-ups or what.	relies on other people	dependence
45. He thinks if he's successful it's because he's smart.	abilities are the reason for his success	internal locus of control for success
46. I think he uses it (his learning disability) as a crutch.	blames failures on learning disability	external locus of control for failure
47. In his mind before he does something or another he's going to be the greatest there was.	believes in own abilities	self-confidence
48. There's nothing he can't do excepting when he tries to do it, he finds he can't do it.	believes he can do anything	unrealistic expectations
49. If he can't do it today, to heck with it.	gives up on difficult tasks	precipitance/ avoidance
50. To start off with he expects too much but then he turns around and expects too little because of the fact he doesn't want to try it because it didn't work right the first time.	gives up when unsuccessful	fear of failure
51. If he knows somebody he won't want to go over and approach them and I don't know why that is.	does not take initiative in social situations	weak social skills

52. It's not shyness because he's never really been a shy child.	is not shy	positive social skills
53. He wants to do that for show.	seeks attention through inappropriate behaviour	negative attention seeking behaviour
54. If he looks at it and thinks he can do it just like that, fine, but if it's something he doesn't even want to try there's no motivation whatever.	is not motivated to do difficult tasks	fear of failure
55. He's not really critical of what he does as long as it's finished or as long as it's done.	completing task is prime motivator	precipitance/ avoidance
56. He's always been told, did you think of what you were going to do before you did it? And the answer was no.	does not consider consequences before acting	impulsivity
57. He knows after he's done it he's going to get into trouble but at the particular point in time no, he didn't think about it.	does not consider consequences before acting	impulsivity
58. He had to find that out for himself even though we did tell him he couldn't do it.	seeks out own answers	independence
59. If there's something he likes, he can stay at it for a long time.	activity determines level of attention span	inconsistent attention span

60.	If it comes to drawing he can spend hours drawing.	can draw for extended periods of time	inconsistent attention span
61.	I think it's because he's not interested. He's bored.	becomes bored with activities he's not interested in	boredom
62.	Anger (is his reaction to frustration).	reacts to frustration with anger	anger
63.	It's a throw, a kick.	reacts to frustration physically	physical response
64.	I think we're very close.	parents indicate support	positive parental interaction
65.	They (teachers) like him very much. They say he's very nice.	teachers enjoy him	positive teacher interaction
66.	They (teachers) say he gets along well with his peers.	develops friendships	positive teacher interaction
67.	He's very understanding of the other children.	supportive of peers	positive peer interaction
68.	He is an obeyer of the rules...whatever the rules are. He may not agree with them, or not like them, but he will obey them.	accepts authority	positive social skills
69.	He makes friends easily.	develops friendships easily	positive peer interaction
70.	He may make six friends in a week and two weeks later he's only got one of them.	has difficulty maintaining friendships	negative peer interation

71. If he doesn't like the child, he will not have anything to do with him.	avoids children he doesn't like	negative peer interation
72. He's definitely a leader.	has leadership qualities	independence
73. He's got company manners.	acts appropriately with visitors	positive social skills
74. "Mrs. P said I had to do them. She didn't say I had to do them right".	finishing task more important than accuracy	precipitance/ avoidance
75. All he wants to do is get it all done and turn it in. He doesn't really put the effort for right and wrong...the only effort is getting it done.	places more importance on completing tasks than effort	precipitance/ avoidance
76. Sometimes I don't think he's particularly happy with himself.	lack of self esteem	negative self image

Michael's Teacher's Interview (77-110)

77. He gets along well with other people.	interacts well with people	positive social skills
78. I don't think he thinks very highly of himself.	lack of self esteem	negative self image
79. He's bright and because of that, it bothers him.	conflict over discrepancy between achievement and ability	frustration
80. He says right out "Why can't I get this?"	critical of inabilities	negative self criticism

81. You can just see that he doesn't even want to (try) because he figures that he's going to get them all wrong anyway so why even bother.	avoids activities when anticipating failure	fear of failure
82. He doesn't seem to rely on other people, other kids, for doing things.	doesn't rely on other people	independence
83. (He's successful because of) hard work.	believes success is related to effort	internal locus of control for succuss
84. (He's not successful because he was) tired, stayed up late last night...or just forgot.	accepts responsibility for own failure	internal locus of control for failure
85. He'll be chuckling away when nobody else has really understood it or grasped it.	understands situations beyond his years	maturity
86. Definitely a last minute kind of worker.	does not plan ahead	precipitance/ avoidance
87. Most of the time (he expects) too little of himself.	does not believe in his own abilities	unrealistic expectations
88. I just think that he only thinks that he can only do a certain amount of work or only read a certain type of book.	does not believe in his own abilities	lack of self-confidence
89. I think he's convinced himself that he's not very capable of doing things so he just does very little of anything.	undermines own abilities	fear of failure

90.	He gets anxious when we orally read.	becomes anxious when doing difficult tasks	anxiety
91.	He moves alot. He kind of twitches or he'll almost get this kind of blank stare on his face (when he's anxious).	physical response to stress	physical response
92.	If he makes a mistake, it's well "this is just because I can't read" or "I'm left handed".	blames himself for failure	internal locus of control for failure
93.	He does put himself down for not being able to do things.	criticizes his inabilities	negative self criticism
94.	He can stick to something. That depends on the task though.	task dictates attention span	inconsistent attention span
95.	Like math he really has to be coached.	needs support in math	dependence
96.	But some tasks he can just keep on going and before you know it he's done.	able to concentrate for extended periods of time	inconsistent attention span
97.	He's very shy.	has difficulty initiating interactions	weak social skills
98.	He's had difficulty over the last few years making friends.	has difficulty beginning relationships	negative peer interactions
99.	The 'poor me' kind of kid.	feels sorry for himself	negative self image
100.	Where he does show maturity though is being able to relate quite well with adults.	relates well with adults	maturity

101.	He's a real charmer. He's a very likeable kid.	teacher likes him	positive teacher interaction
102.	They (teachers) think he's a really nice kid.	other teachers like him	positive teacher interaction
103.	I don't think he perceives himself as not having friends.	does not realize lack of relationships	negative peer interactions
104.	He's outside, active and doing things and there's other kids around...but it's very seldom (that there are kids with him).	does not interact with peers	negative peer interaction
105.	Probably more of a follower.	does not assume leadership position	dependence
106.	I think he's very good at that (non-verbals).	able to interpret non-verbal communication	positive non-verbal skills
107.	He knows just from my face what's expected.	able to interpret facial expressions	positive non-verbal skills
108.	He's been very good about picking up cues from the other kids in the classroom.	able to read mood in classroom	positive non-verbal skills
109.	I think he talks circles around the other kids.	converses on a level above own age	maturity
110.	He's probably a lonely, sad boy sometimes.	sometimes unhappy	sadness

APPENDIX E

Appendix E

THEMATIC ABSTRACTION OF STEVEN'S EXPERIENCE

Excerpt	Paraphrase	Theme
Steven's Interview (1-24)		
1. Horseback riding and art and working with animals (are things I am good at).	acknowledges strengths	positive self image
2. Math and social and L.A. and spelling (are things I am not good at).	acknowledges weaknesses	self awareness
3. It's (school work) hard except I get through it.	persists with difficult tasks	perseverance
4. I work easier alone.	prefers to work by himself	independence
5. It's just easier for me to get things done and I don't get distracted.	acknowledges own needs for completing tasks	self awareness
6. I try out what I'm going to do and then I do it.	makes a plan of what to do	planful or organized behaviour
7. (I'd like to be) a vet.	defines long term goal	planful or organized behaviour
8. Well I have to get it done and I have to get it right or get a good mark.	sets unattainable goals	unrealistic expectations
9. When you have to do lots of work that you don't understand, it gets boring.	becomes disinterested with difficult tasks	boredom

10. Sometimes I wish I could rewind time and then correct my mistake.	fails to accept past mistakes	negative self criticism
11. Sometimes spelling's easy and math, except social is usually always hard.	acknowledges strengths and weaknesses	self awareness
12. Because sometimes I don't know my answers and I just guess at them.	does not seek help	negative academic self concept
13. My hands tighten up (when I'm frustrated).	physical reaction to stress	physical response
14. I don't go with strangers.	avoids new people	weak social skills
15. Sometimes good (relationship with parents).	mixed reaction to parent's relationship	negative parental interaction
16. I've improved.	sees self as improving	positive self image
17. She's (teacher) fun.	enjoys teacher	positive teacher interaction
18. Well I'm improving. I'm doing better.	sees self as improving	positive self image
19. Oh it's easy (to make friends).	able to make new friends	positive peer interaction
20. I know other people and they introduce me to their friends.	has plan for meeting new friends	positive social skills
21. A friend that's interested in some of the stuff I like.	chooses friends with similar interests	positive peer interaction

22.	I do different things and I act different and I do things different.	sees self as unique	positive self image
23.	I don't work well.	has poor work habits	negative academic self concept
24.	I've got lots of friends.	feels he has a network of friends	positive peer interaction

Steven's Parents' Interview (25-84)

25.	I think he feels good about himself in his creativity.	enjoys creative activities	positive self image
26.	He's always making things and I think he's very impressed with himself that way.	sees himself as creative	positive self image
27.	He doesn't even need you to like it. He likes himself about that.	seeks self approval	positive self image
28.	Socially I think he likes himself.	acknowledges ability to to interact with others	positive self image
29.	He has a twinkle in his eye (when he's happy).	demonstrates his happiness	positive self image
30.	I think he definitely doesn't feel so good about school.	does not enjoy school	negative academic self concept
31.	He's very concerned that he might fail.	fears failure	fear of failure
32.	I don't think he feels good about himself athletically.	does not view himself as athletic	negative self image

33. Steven doesn't feel good in competition.	does not enjoy competitive activities	lack of self confidence
34. He's very independent.	able to do things by himself	independence
35. He gets himself up in the morning, gets himself dressed.	does not rely on others	independence
36. I think he believes in his own innate ability and strength.	believes in own own abilities	self confidence
37. He doesn't brag or show it off.	does not seek negative attention	positive self image
38. (Success) is just rewards from hard work.	acknowledges control over own success	internal locus of control for success
39. I think it's just an inner ability he feels he's been born with.	believes in own abilities	internal locus of control for success
40. He fails when he doesn't understand the question quote unquote.	assumes responsibility for failure	internal locus of control for failure
41. I think it's just a fear of being laughed at.	fears being rejected	fear of failure
42. I think he feels that if he does something, he has to do it well or else he's a failure.	sets unattainable goals	unrealistic expectations
43. If he doesn't do it well he won't try again.	avoids difficult situations	fear of failure
44. A mischievious sense of humour.	ejoys finding humour in situations	positive self image

45.	He wants to be a vet. He knows already.	defines long term goal	planful or organized behaviour
46.	I think he always expects again that he's going to succeed and maybe he's a little surprised when he doesn't.	does not anticipate failure	unrealistic expectations
47.	He expected success immediately.	does not anticipate failure	unrealistic expectations
48.	If he can't do it, he'll talk himself into not wanting to do it.	avoids difficult situations	fear of failure
49.	The creative part of him expects nothing but achievement because he can.	believes in his creative abilities	positive self image
50.	He doesn't have alot of patience for things that require repetition or mundane drudgery type of thing.	becomes bored with repetitive tasks	boredom
51.	I don't think he's thrilled with school because it requires doing the same thing over and over again.	finds school repetitive	negative academic self concept
52.	I think he does have some doubts about his ability in school.	doubts his academic abilities	negative academic self concept
53.	It has to be something that really twigs inside...that really catches his attention.	attention span depends on activity	inconsistent attention span
54.	He says "I've already learned it. Why do I need to do this again?"	becomes frustrated with repetition	frustration

55. Not so much frustration as just boredom.	becomes bored with school tasks	boredom
56. It's the problem with the lack of attention and he's always in a hurry so he rushes through things.	finishes tasks too quickly	precipitance/ avoidance
57. He won't go back and redo it.	once a task is completed he's finished with it	precipitance/ avoidance
58. By and large I think he thinks about the consequences of his actions far more now than he ever used to.	thinks about his actions first	reflection
59. I would suggest that the impulsive part is a familiar situation that he can react to, doesn't have to think about.	reacts impulsively in familiar situations	impulsivity
60. (His attention) depends on the activity.	attention span varies according to activity	inconsistent attention span
61. When he's making something, he'll spend hours, days doing it.	can concentrate for extended period of time	inconsistent attention span
62. If it requires reading and writing, he doesn't do well.	fails at school tasks	negative academic self concept
63. He's not an angry child.	does not react to stress with anger	positive self image
64. He's always very willing.	is cooperative	positive self image

65. If you're not right there beside him, he'll give up on things.	relies on others	dependence
66. Sometimes I think he can intimidate his peers.	peers do not always understand him	negative peer interaction
67. Adults warm to him because he will move right in and just kind of assume the position that he instinctively feels is his right to have.	is comfortable in adult relationships	maturity
68. I think he and I get along amazingly well considering probably the extra pressure that's on him.	abot to get along in spite of academic problems	positive parental interation
69. I think that sometimes he thinks I expect too much of him.	misinterprets father's expectations	negative parental interaction
70. We don't have as much fun in our relationship as we could.	relationship with father is too serious	negative parental interaction
71. It's probably a question of home expectations being greater than his own expectations.	self and home expectations in conflict	negative parental interaction
72. He has a problem expressing what he thinks and feels on paper.	has difficulty writing ideas down	negative academic self concept
73. It has as much to do with his ability to write as his desire to get through it before it's all there.	completes tasks before thinking them through	precipitance/ avoidance

74. I think he's pretty happy (with teachers).	likes teachers	positive teacher interaction
75. They (teachers) think he's co-operative and pleasant in class.	teachers like him	positive teacher interaction
76. He's not a behaviour problem.	acts in an appropriate manner	positive social skills
77. It's the more common interests because he's got some friends that are quite a bit older. He's got some friends that are quite a bit younger. It depends on if they want to do what he likes doing.	chooses friends who have similar likes	positive peer interaction
78. He's got a few that have been hanging on for years but he does seem to kind of play with somebody different every day.	has difficulty maintaining friendships	negative peer interaction
79. By and large he's in the leadership position. If they build a snow fort, he decides the design.	makes decisions and directs others	independence
80. The feedback we've had from any of his friends' parents is that Steven is a delightful child to have over and sets a good example for their own.	acts as a positive role model	positive peer interaction
81. He's very intuitive.	is sensitive to social cues	positive non verbal skills

82.	Whenever we're reading he knows when mom's getting mad and I'm trying to hid it.	interprets non verbal behaviour accurately	positive non verbal skills
83.	Body language and uncommunicated strategies have always ...he's always had a good idea of what's going on.	is able to interpret non verbal communication	positive non verbal skills
84.	He probably brings it on himself but he's very competitive with his brothers and I think that is difficult for him.	creates competition with siblings	negative sibling interaction

Steven's Teacher's Interview (85-112)

85.	(He feels good about) science, very strongly...art... anything that doesn't involve alot of writing.	enjoys subjects that the does well in	positive self image
86.	You can see his active interest in those when he participates.	demonstrates that the feels good	positive self image
87.	(He doesn't like) anything to do with alot of writing.	does not enjoy writing	negative academic self concept
88.	You can see the frustration building up when he starts to do anything written.	becomes frustrated with difficult tasks	frustration
89.	He'll hold his pen really hard.	physical reaction to stress	physical response
90.	He'll say "do we have to do it all?"	fears not being able to complete tasks	fear of failure

91. (His success) has alot to do with his self confidence.	believes in his own abilities	self confidence
92. The first thing he says...the owness is on he didn't understand it.	assumes responsibility for failure	internal locus of control for failure
93. Short term (goal) is to make it out of my class.	defines short term goal	planful or organized behaviour
94. He expects probably too little of himself.	does not live up to abilities	unrealistic expectations
95. He doesn't have the confidence to say "I know I can and I'm going to do it".	does not believe in own abilities	lack of self confidence
96. Very little self motivation.	is not interested in activities	boredom
97. He has a very short attention span.	has difficulty persisting with tasks	inconsistent attention span
98. He'll only persevere up to the point of saying "okay it's done".	completing a task is prime motivator	precipitance/ avoidance
99. He doesn't believe that he can.	does not believe in own abilities	lack of self confidence
100. He never puts himself down.	is not self critical	positive self image
101. He'll spurt out whatever comes out first.	talks without thinking	impulsivity
102. (He'll stay with an activity) only if it's something that really interests him.	can persist with activities he enjoys	inconsistent attention span

103. He won't back off. He won't shy away (from people).	takes initiative in social situations	positive social skills
104. They're very supportive when anything happens to Steven.	parents are supportive	positive parental interaction
105. Steven's a neat kid. I just love having him in my class.	teacher enjoys him	positive teacher interaction
106. He didn't have alot of friends in the beginning, only because of his lack and his weakness and the kids would tend to pick on him.	lack of friendships	negative peer interaction
107. He does alot of flitting (from friend to friend).	does not maintain friendships	negative peer interaction
108. He's a follower.	relies on others	dependence
109. He doesn't have enough strength and confidence in himself to think that he can get the group.	does not believe in own leadership abilities	lack of self confidence
110. He's very fast on that (nonverbal communication) extremely.	interprets non verbal communications quickly	positive non verbal skills
111. There's no clues given, no verbal communication clues given that says, yah, Steven's close (to his parents).	does not talk about parents	negative parental interaction

112. I hear it in kids all the time...say my sister did this or my mom did this...or I hear dad mentioned alot and Steven I don't, hardly at all.	does not talk about family	negative parental interaction